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ABSTRACT

Following an introduction by John N. Gardner, this monograph presents the text of six keynote addresses, all concerning different issues relative to the freshman year of college, that were delivered at various Freshman Year Experience Conferences during 1988 and 1989. Some of the topics covered concern: freshman development; giving the freshman experience more impact and meaning; the changing demographics of incoming freshman and what the demographic trends look like for the future; and the first year experience and its connection to society and culture. In "Educating Today's Freshmen" Arthur E. Levine offers five suggestions on developing programs in times of uncertainty. M. Lee Upcraft, in "Evolving Theoretical Perspectives on Freshmen," reviews the history of student development theory and presents some challenges to this theory. The third paper, "Today's Freshman: A Puzzle and a Challenge," by Alexander W. Astin, summarizes findings of 23 years of surveying incoming freshmen and offers suggestions for giving the freshman year more impact and meaning. "Changing Demographics--Preparing Freshman Students for the 21st Century," by Reginald Wilson, notes demographic trends leading to seven challenges facing higher education. In "Discovering, Remembering, Learning: When Our Separate Journeys Converge," L. Lee Knefelkamp recounts personal educational experiences and challenges educators to help students connect to meaningful educational experience. The final paper is "International Perspective on The First-Year Experience," by Peter Scott. It addresses the changing context of first-year studies, discusses related academic and non-academic issues, and indicates how these connect to a broader view of higher education. (GLR)

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Monograph Series
Number 2

The Freshman Year
EXPERIENCE

Perspectives
on the Freshman Year

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Views on the critical first year from

Alexander Astin, Lee Knefelkamp,
Arthur Levine, Reginald Wilson,
Lee Upcraft, and Peter Scott

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National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
University of South Carolina
1991

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on the Freshman Year

Selected Major Addresses
from Freshman Year Experience Conferences

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Alexander Astin, Lee Knefelkamp,
Arthur Levine, Reginald Wilson,
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National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
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Introduction

John N. Gardner

With the exception of Peter Scott of Great Britain, the authors of these speeches need virtually no introduction for American readers of this monograph. Each of these individuals is an outstanding spokesperson for higher education, and each offers a unique perspective on the freshman year experience. The staff of our National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience selected these six speeches from the approximately 90 that have been given at 32 Freshman Year Experience Conferences because of their outstanding quality and the variety of viewpoints they represent.

Conference organizers make a value statement in the selection of featured speakers. The speakers whose addresses are included in this monograph have been at the forefront of change in higher education, and their espoused values reinforce the ideals of the freshman year experience movement. The selection of keynote/plenary speakers for our conference series has been also a very personal decision for me in my capacity as the conference host and director. I have had the privilege to have a long-standing professional and/or personal relationship with many of these individuals, and I am honored to count these six as my colleagues within the international movement to enhance the freshman/first year experience.

Art Levine spoke to our first "special focus" conference for small colleges. He was, at that time, the President of a unique small college, Bradford College. I had come to know Art through my work with the American Association for Higher Education and, of course, from my reading of his writings, especially *When Dreams and Heroes Died*. He had touched and inspired my thinking, and I was confident he would do so for conference participants. My prediction was correct.

Lee Upcraft, who delivered his address to our third Freshman Year Experience-West Conference co-hosted by the University of California at Irvine, is a special friend and colleague. He and I worked for three years, from 1986 to 1989, on a *magnum opus* for Jossey-Bass, *The Freshman Year Experience*. Lee is the personification of student affairs professionalism blended with outstanding academic preparation and teaching abilities. He is a writer/editor *par excellence* in this field and understands first-year students as well as anybody I have met in American higher education.

Alexander Astin is a seminal thinker in this national movement to understand the nature of first-year students and to enhance the quality of their learning experience. Sandy's wife, Helen, spoke at one of our Freshman Year Experience West Coast conferences, and ultimately we were able to secure him as well. We are honored by his willingness to associate his enormous personal stature and research-based knowledge with our own efforts to enhance the freshman year experience.

Reginald Wilson, representing the American Council on Education, gave an eloquent keynote address at the annual Columbia meeting in February, 1989. His address confirmed for me why he has been held in such high regard for so long by many both inside and outside his own association. Previously, he had visited the University of South Carolina campus and conducted an outstanding workshop for deans and department heads on the subject of enhancing affirmative action recruiting efforts. I decided then that I must have him back to address one of our Freshman Year Experience conferences.

Another one of my colleagues in the American Association for Higher Education, Lee Knefelkamp, has delivered keynote/plenary addresses at three of our Freshman Year Experience conferences and moved the audience each time. She, herself, is a graduate of a small liberal arts college, Macalester. We thought her an ideal speaker for our second

annual small college Freshman Year Experience meeting in Cincinnati in November, 1989. Her speech was extremely well received; and, hence, we wanted to include it in this monograph.

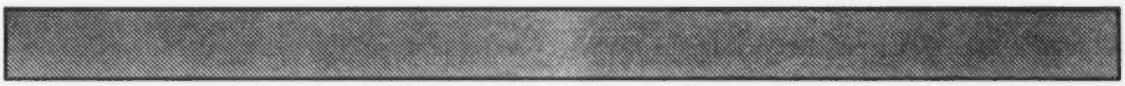
Finally, because our activities to enhance the first-year experience have been truly an international movement, we wanted to include one non-American passport holder's thoughts on the subject of enhancing the first-year experience. Peter Scott is the editor of *The Times Higher Education Supplement* in London. He delivered a marvelous keynote for us at Cambridge University where we held our summer conference in 1988. His address was followed by an editorial in *The Times Higher Educational Supplement* of July 29, 1988, from which I quote the conclusion.

> The American experience is not discouraging. It proves not only that wider access is not the enemy of academic excellence but that, handled right, it can even nourish such excellence. But "handled right" is an important qualification. The first-year experience, the collision point, has to be taken more seriously than it is today. It must be seen not simply as the business of student services officers and admissions tutors. Instead it must become a mainstream academic preoccupation.

This monograph would not have been possible without the competent, careful, and gentle editing of members of our staff of The National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience: Betsy O. Barefoot, Associate Director; Mary J. Hendrix, and Rachel Few Stokes, Editorial Assistants. I am deeply indebted to them for their work on the first of what we hope will be several volumes of keynote/plenary speeches from The Freshman Year Experience Conferences. We hope that you will find these speeches in the cold light of print as warm, moving, inspirational, and thought-provoking as did those who heard them delivered at the respective conferences.

EDUCATING TODAY'S FRESHMEN

By Arthur E. Levine



Keynote Address
The Freshman Year Experience
Small College Conference
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
October 3, 1988

For the past 160 years the topic of the freshman year has periodically been a subject of concern for the country. In recent years it has been taken up with a new urgency. Much is being written about it. There has been a great deal of discussion about demographics and what changing populations mean in terms of the kinds of people we are all going to be educating. There has been a great deal of conversation about how student character has changed and what that means for the kind of education we all need to offer. There has been considerable discussion about the characteristics that make for a successful freshman year. In fact there aren't many campuses in America anymore that haven't heard about University 101.

But I want to enter this conversation from a different angle. I want to talk about the freshman year in a different context. There is a sense today that higher education is in trouble, that the freshman year, in particular, is deep in the doldrums. And there is a sense that once upon a time there was a golden era that has passed.

In the days of that golden era, we had administrators who were educational leaders. We had programs with vision. There was integrity in the freshman college curriculum. Students were involved in learning. There was no need to reclaim a legacy. This was a time when faculty and students used to rejoice in learning together. Well, that's all gone.

It's hard to pin down exactly when all this changed, but some of our braver and more intellectually-oriented scholars have made serious attempts to do this. In the last few years, we have heard from Allan Bloom and William Bennett. They both know when the golden era ended. It ended in the 1960s. We embraced cultural relativism and lost what was essential in higher education.

But before that, Robert Hutchins, who was President of the University of Chicago from 1920 to 1950, said that the golden era ended around the turn of the century due to the rise of professional schools which undermined the liberal arts. According to Thorstein Veblen, the economist, that wasn't when it happened. Veblen said we lost the golden era right after the Civil War when colleges eliminated requirements in favor of the free elective system. However, in 1828, the Yale faculty claimed that the contemporary reformers who cared too much about vocationalization of the curriculum were to blame for the end of the golden era. But Cardinal Newman blamed John Locke and the free thinkers for the eclipse of the classics. However, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in the first century B.C., said it was his fellow Greeks who brought about the end of the golden era because they encouraged premature specialization. However, I think it was Plato, who leaned over one day and told some student, "Get your requirements out of the way."

That is a pretty rough approximation of when the golden era ended. Now we must account for what we have lost. Today we hear that college admissions standards for freshmen have decreased and our freshmen are not as good as the freshmen who came before them. Well, in 1842, President Francis Wayland of Brown University wrote: "Our students are more and more imperfectly prepared, causing the standards of college education to become more and more depressed."

Similarly, reports say that the quality of our teaching faculty has declined. And freshmen are receiving poorer instruction. Yet, in 1828, trustees and faculty at Yale, reporting on the state of higher education, commented, "Not one of our colleges is a place of thorough learning, and not one of the better class of them does half of what it might do by bringing the minds of its instructors to act directly on the minds of its pupils."

The curriculum is blurred and confused today, and freshmen receive an education that makes less sense. We have so crowded the curriculum that it is rendered superficial and probably less valuable. We have lost our ethical mooring. The list goes on and on. But in 1842, a best-selling critique of higher education, the equivalent of Allan Bloom's book, called the curriculum "so crowded. . . with studies as to render it superficial." The point I want to make is that higher education hasn't gone to hell in a handbasket. We have not lost the golden era because there was no golden era. The problems that we are feeling today are perennial. They have existed on our campuses at some level almost since the beginning.

What stands out today is that we are currently living through a period of profound change. A technological revolution is sweeping the country. Look at the kinds of courses we are teaching that we didn't teach a decade ago. Look at the kinds of hardware we have. In 1829 the biggest innovation on campus was the blackboard. Think about how far we have come.

The country has also undergone a demographic shift. We're going to have a remarkably different population living in this country. A century from now, the majority of Americans will be people of color. We are also moving from an industrial to a service and information economy. We are changing from a national to a global society. Look at all the global studies courses springing up on your campuses. All these massive changes are happening at once.

I want you to try to imagine a time for a moment. I want you to imagine a time in which a technological revolution is going on in this country. I want you to imagine a time in which old industries are dying and new industries are being born. I want you to imagine a time in which the number of older people in the country is increasing, and the number of younger people is decreasing; a time when the population is moving west and south. I want you to try to imagine a time in which religious fundamentalism is experiencing a revival. I want you to try to imagine a time in which large numbers of immigrants with relatively little formal education are entering the country. Imagine a time in which fewer and fewer people are voting or taking part in civic affairs. I want you to imagine a time in which we have a two-term western president, overwhelmingly re-elected on a platform reducing the national debt, increasing national defense and enhancing thrift in government, and whose vice president succeeded him in office.

The president was Andrew Jackson, the vice president was Martin Van Buren. The effect on the country was impressive. And the effect on colleges and universities was dramatic. What happened was that enrollments fell and students started questioning the value of a college education. Could it really get them jobs? Colleges experienced higher dropout rates. Colleges also found themselves competing with non-collegiate competitors--proprietary schools, apprenticeships, industry. Colleges were turning to nontraditional students--older students, women students, even some minorities (but not many). Financially, colleges were in horrible shape; colleges were closing across the country. The value of the liberal arts became a serious question. There was a pressing demand for more vocational subjects, and it was widely said that the public was dissatisfied with what colleges were doing.

So, what did the colleges do? What do we always do when we're in trouble? The first thing was to blame ourselves. We used to be good, but somehow we lost it; it's our fault. Next they undertook a searching self-evaluation, and issued reports that suggested varied and conflicting approaches for reform. (Bad times for higher education have always been boom times for the timber industry.)

The reports from that era read much like the reports issued in the past few years. There

were reports that said we have got to change colleges fundamentally and get students more involved in the learning process. There were reports that said, "Let's reform these liberal arts colleges a little bit." And finally, there were reports, reminiscent of current reports, that recommended programs that had been dead for at least three decades and didn't work even when they had been in effect.

I think what stands out in that earlier period is that during periods of readjustment, times in which society changes very, very quickly, higher education institutions like all social institutions fall behind. And they have to catch up. All social institutions do. But the purpose and performance of higher education looms large. Perennial problems grow more urgent, and they seem more real. Doubts about the present and the future multiply. Colleges and universities, during this period, have a tendency to look backward. Over the past few years we have seen a steady stream of books, reports, and pronouncements about higher education which have taken a nostalgically rosey view. And that is unfortunate. Because nostalgically rosey views of yesterday won't guide tomorrow.

There are no simple answers. To predict what our society is going to look like in the next few decades is science fiction. The current period of rapid change isn't over. It is going to continue, and according to some, it is going to accelerate. If we look back at that earlier period, during the Industrial Revolution, college deans and faculty didn't wake up one morning and say, "What happened to all our freshmen? How come all the rules seem to have changed? Why is everybody dropping out?" They didn't think, "No wonder all these students are leaving, and the old rules seem to be falling away--it's because we are living through the Industrial Revolution." What they did was exactly what we are doing now. They were confused, uncertain, and even floundering.

We name periods of change only in retrospect. Only in the 1890s did the name "Industrial Revolution" stick. For those of us living through them, these periods are only confusing. They involve new rules, new values, and new criticisms of colleges. We can't make sense of trends yet. Which one of the current trends is going to dominate? Is it globalization? If we shaped our curriculum in the direction of globalization, would that do it? Or should we shape it towards new technologies, to new demographics? Which one is the most important? How do we build a program when we don't know what's important? And we won't really know until this period of change is over.

As a result, I think it imposes a very large agenda on all of us. Let me suggest what stands out for me in terms of setting a direction for small colleges. It is critical that we identify those elements that are fundamental to the purpose and performance of higher education and the small colleges and that we work to preserve and enhance those elements. Throughout history we have watched too many schools, too many systems fail to cherish and defend what is important. I am not trying to sound dramatic. All I'm saying is--as we proceed in the next years, let's not throw out the baby with the bath water.

Let me make a second suggestion. Let's search for the right question. One of the frequent criticisms of the recent wave of reports on undergraduate education is that the analyses are old, the conclusions are familiar and perhaps less useful than they once were. The recommendations are likely to replicate many of the problems we already have on our campuses. It is a time that is going to demand hard questioning. Maybe it is time to ask who our students are, who our students should be, how do we reach the students we have been missing since World War II? Perhaps we should ask ourselves how to move from teaching to learning? That's not a small change; that's not a rhetorical change. If we ever made that change, the academy would

look nothing like it does now. Where is the next generation of faculty going to come from? What outcomes should a college education achieve? If we are going to reform the freshman year, what is the freshman year all about? More than just a question of attrition and retention, what do we want to happen that year? How do we move from serving time to serving educational attainment? How do we measure success? We do it now by credits, grades, and degrees. How do we fund this enterprise? These are the questions we will be facing over the next few years. We must identify the important questions and begin to find ways to answer them.

Third, we must avoid the easy answers. One of the fundamental errors that educational institutions have made is to hunker down and hold tight and do nothing, hoping bad times will pass. Hunkering down has terribly negative effects on institutions. What happens is instead of hiring leaders for presidents, they are more likely to hire managers. Second, the hunkering down permeates the entire institution. Every one hunkers down, trying to hang on to his or her turf. It divides department from department, faculty member from faculty member. And the result is that whatever it is that makes up an academic community just dies. Not only is there no leadership, but there is also no followership. And in the final analysis, the tough decisions are not made. When budget cuts are necessary, they are likely to be made across the board, rather than reducing in areas of weakness and adding in areas of strength.

The irony of that approach is that colleges trade quality for longevity. The bad part is that they don't get either. Hunkering down can only occur under two circumstances--when the problems are short term and when the conditions are as bad as they are going to get. Neither is true today. The end result is that in the next few years we are going to see lots of schools deeply hurt by hunkering down.

Another inappropriate single answer is to turn a college over to the marketplace. For example, in order to get a freshman class, a college may add an adult program to get a few adults, add an honors program to get some honors students, or add a program for learning disabled students or vocational curricula to get a few more. This doesn't work. It is very expensive, much more so than a leaner, more carefully thought-out program. It also encourages mediocrity. Weak programs drain potentially strong programs of resources required for quality. And it does not attract students. Instead of seeing the curriculum as half full, they see it as half empty. If you want an honors program, go to an honors school. If you want an adult program, go to an adult school. The end result is that marketplace strategies for enhancing the freshman year lose students.

Let me make a fourth suggestion. There is a real obligation in the next few years, particularly to people like you who are committed to changing the freshman year, to educate the whole institution to everything you've learned so that they are moving in the same direction you are. It means moving the discussion back to the problems, the pitfalls, the directions, the opportunities.

Let me make a fifth suggestion. Periods of readjustment and times of change have created marvelous climates for innovation and wonderful opportunities to experiment and try new things. If we look again to the lessons learned in the late 19th century, special opportunities have always been available for small colleges. When we look at the institutions that were successful, that truly emerged as leaders in the 1840s, 1850s, they were the small colleges. This era of declining enrollments and diminishing resources brought forth bold and exciting new curriculums that made the names of institutions as varied as Brown, Michigan, Vermont, and Union. These small schools produced some of higher education's most celebrated programs. David Riesman once

said that all of American education is shaped like a snake-like procession. At the head of the beast are schools like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. And at the bottom of Riesman's beast are the community colleges, following just behind are the less selective private colleges. It is ironic that today America is spending a lot more time watching the tail of the beast than its head. It is because the institutions at the tail are the ones that ran into contemporary higher education's problems first. As a group, these are the institutions that have pioneered the solutions that the rest of American higher education will need.

My own institution, Bradford College, is a case in point. Seven years ago the institution underwent a dramatic curriculum change. The results have been that we suddenly found foundation giving going sky high. Our applications increased by 25-35% a year. Our entering students' standard test scores shot up. There was some point in which the Christian Science Monitor picked out four schools doing exciting things in the liberal arts: Harvard, Princeton, UCLA, and Bradford. The end result is this: the one thing that history has proved is that resources follow programming, not the other way around. This is a time to seize the opportunities.

There is a wonderful story that is told about Carol Channing and Mary Martin. After the Broadway productions of Hello Dolly and Peter Pan closed, they were heading off to Britain, thoroughly exhausted. Mary Martin said to Carol Channing, "Why don't you just have yourself done over today? Get some new clothes, get a new hairdo, get a facial, just make yourself feel terrific!" And they agreed to meet at a particular corner at a certain hour. When they arrived, Mary looked at Carol and said, "My God, you're beautiful!" And at that very moment, a very large bird flew over. By the time the bird passed, Carol Channing was no longer beautiful. She looked at Mary Martin and said, "Just think, for some people they sing!"

For all of us, this could be one of those times. It could be a glorious moment to sing.

EVOLVING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON FRESHMEN

M. Lee Upcraft

Keynote Address
The Freshman Year Experience Conference
Irvine, California
January 30, 1989

If I were sitting out where you are and I saw at 8:30 a.m. on a Monday morning a topic like, "Evolving Theoretical Perspectives on Freshmen," I think I'd be setting my snooze alarm for about 9:10. What I really want to do is talk to you about some of the issues and problems facing freshman students and point you in the direction of some theories which help explain freshman development. I will be referring to several citations of research, literature, theories and theorists, and I have prepared a select bibliography which accompanies this address. What I want to do today is to trace briefly the history of student development theory from colonial to present times, present some of the continuing challenges which existing theories seem adequate to explain, present some continuing challenges of the freshman year which I think current theories are inadequate to explain, and offer some final thoughts on student development theory.

Why talk about student development theory and particularly about freshman development theory? The obvious answer is so that we can understand freshmen in greater depth and realize that today's generations of college students have really been taking quite a bum rap. They are stereotyped in ways that are not very flattering. Quite often one sees unflattering comparisons of today's students with the idealists and activist freshmen of the sixties. They are the generation supposedly characterized by those students who, when asked by a faculty member to define the difference between ignorance and apathy, replied, "We don't know and we don't care." They comprise the generation who changed the cry of the '60s from "Don't trust anyone over 30," to the cry of the '80s, "Don't trust anyone under $30,000." They represent the generation that has been popularly characterized by the highly and overly competitive freshman who said, "It's not enough that I succeed; everyone else must fail." This is the generation that some people say can't distinguish its needs from its greeds; and finally, this is the generation characterized by these students who, when asked why they are going to college, said, "to get it over with." That latter answer was particularly disturbing to me since it was my own son who gave me the answer to that question.

Today, I want to look at college students from a somewhat different perspective and talk about them in ways that I see them as I have looked at the literature and research and talked with students around the country and at my own institution. The original student development theory, of course, was *in loco parentis*, which is the responsibility of the institution to act on behalf of parents for the good of their students and for the purpose of developing good Christian moral character. We did this for about the first 300 years of American higher education through the enactment and enforcement of strict rules and regulations and severe sanctions. For example, a colonial college president was quoted as saying that "the dullest boys have the most affectionate mothers and the most vicious boys here come recommended with all the virtues of saints. Of course, I promised to be a father to them all."

The way we exercised *in loco parentis* in those days was through a cataloging of all the things students couldn't do. At Harvard, for example, students were forbidden to lie, steal, curse, swear, use obscene language, play with cards or dice, get drunk, frequent inns, associate with any person with a bad reputation, commit fornication, call each other nicknames, buy, sell, or exchange anything, or be disrespectful or disorderly at public worship. Needless to say, like many of today's students, we created a forbidden-fruit syndrome by the enumeration of all those wonderful things that students couldn't do, and appropriately, they rebelled.

By the turn of the 20th century, however, the development of the disciplines of

psychology, sociology, and anthropology gave us additional insights into human behavior. By the mid-20th century, theorists such as Eric Erickson began to write about the personality development of youth during the college years. His concepts of identity crisis and colleges as a moratorium became our first student development theories beyond *in loco parentis*.

Then came the 1960s. Three or four things happened in the '60s which blew away our thinking about, and our behavior toward, college students. The first, of course, was that *in loco parentis* bit the dust under legal pressures and the challenge of student activists. The day was wiped away when the dean of women could be called by a mother or father to find out precisely where their daughter was and what she was doing. (Or at least the dean of women thought she knew where their daughter was and what she was doing.) Some of you who are as young as I am can remember the days of women's hours and the total control of women's activities. Of course, men had no such regulations. I guess the theory was that if you had the women locked up, the men wouldn't get into any trouble.

Secondly, the age of majority was lowered to 18 which forced us to reconsider our policies and our missions in relation to students, and treat them as legal adults.

Thirdly, social scientists led by Nevitt Sanford with his landmark publication, *The American College*, began to look at college students as a separate field of inquiry, in part to explain their activism. So we had the early theories of Nevitt Sanford. We had Kenniston's theory of alienated youth. We had Perry's theory of intellectual and ethical development. We had Kohlberg's theory of moral development. John Whiteley pioneered work in character development. And, of course, we had the most often quoted student development theory of the last 20 years, Arthur Chickering's seven vectors of development. In the '70s, as a result of all these trends, I think we may have abandoned students to an extent that we now look back on and regret. We threw out *in loco parentis*, we threw out all the rules and regulations, and, in the process, threw out the baby with the bath water. We abandoned student rules about alcohol, and we left students to their own devices to make decisions about alcohol. We abandoned regulations which were designed to regulate sexual activity, and we left students to their own devices to make decisions about sexual activity and behavior. I think we were not better off because of this abandonment, all in the name of the death of *in loco parentis*.

Then, another phenomenon happened. The demographers began to look at high school graduation rates and predicted a declining college enrollment. As a result and for one of the first times in higher education, we began to look at retention. We began to worry about not only how many students we could attract, but also how many we could retain. When we studied students from that perspective, we found that the out-of-classroom environment, which was neglected in the '70s and which we had essentially abandoned, was a factor in retaining students. All of a sudden, we had a renewed interest in student development and collegiate environment. That was the period when the student ecology studies began and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education published its first series of research papers on institutional climate and institutional characteristics. It was the time we discovered with Alexander Astin and Arthur Chickering that students who live in residence halls, generally speaking, earn higher grades and are more likely to be retained in college.

The '80s came along and many theorists began to challenge these earlier notions of student development. Carol Gilligan, for example, and others believed that the existing student development theories were dominated by male values and, in particular, took to task the theories of Lawrence Kohlberg, William Perry, and others. Patricia Cross came along and said that existing theories of student

development really did not apply to older students. Jacqueline Fleming, Doris Wright, and others believed existing theories were based on white middle-class assumptions which did not necessarily apply to blacks and other racial and ethnic minorities. Also, Vivian Cass and others believed that existing theories did not apply to lesbian, gay, and bisexual students because they were based on heterosexual assumptions. Even Arthur Chickering in 1985 reconsidered his seven vectors in the light of those many challenges. We are not just talking about intellectual jostling. The theoretical bases from which we look at students and these challenges affect real students with real issues. For the remainder of this speech, I would like to point to the evidence which I believe mandates that we intensify our efforts to understand students.

The first is the increased racial and ethnic diversity that will be facing higher education in the very near future. Harold Hodgkinson, for example, has predicted by the year 2000 that one in three students will be non-white and will speak English as their second language. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* recently reported that between 1984 and 1986, Hispanic enrollment jumped 17%, Asian American enrollment jumped 15%, American Indian enrollment jumped 7%, and black enrollment has stayed about the same after a decline of several years. Some of you may know that the freshman class at the University of California at Berkeley in the fall of 1988 was 37% white, 26% Asian American, 19% Hispanic, and 11% black.

Jacqueline Fleming has argued that black students in predominantly white institutions compared to white students feel unsupported in the classroom because of the lack of black faculty role models and deficiencies which slight black intellectual development. She also reports that blacks in predominately white institutions are subjected to acts of intolerance and feel isolated, unsupported, lonely, and angry. All things considered, we have to ask, do our theories help us explain and help us deal with the issue of diversity? W. E. Cross, Jr., who attempts to deal with racial and ethnic minority development, acknowledges that, in many ways, the developmental issues for majority students are the same as for minority students, but that they are also different. He believes that minorities proceed through several stages as they cope with a majority student culture.

A second issue related to diversity is how we are going to deal with the gender issues of the '90s and beyond. Some of you are familiar with the works of Hall and Sandler in the early '80s which described a chilly classroom climate and a chilly out-of-classroom climate for women that results in sexual harassment. An evaluation of the "Women's Ways of Knowing" study which was done at Penn State, indicated that one half of our women reported being sexually harrassed sometime during their college career. There has been an increase in campus violence including date rape and sexual assault. In a University of Arizona study, and this is frightening to me, one in six women reported being a victim of rape or attempted rape in the last year. In that same study, one in 15 males admitted he had committed or attempted rape in the last year. Is it getting any better? I am not so sure. In Sandy Astin's current CIRP data, 25% of the males in his survey indicated that if a woman "led them on," they were entitled to have sex with her.

We are also seeing the negative impact of the collegiate environment in a lot of different ways, one of which happened at my own campus. I was sitting in my office about a year ago, and I got a call from a faculty advisor to a sorority. She said that she just had a very disturbing conversation with her sorority president. She thought her sorority might have an anorexia and bulimia problem and wanted to know if our counseling services could go into that chapter and help out? What we discovered was very alarming. Our staff went in and interviewed several of the

sorority members, and it was their estimation that approximately 70% of the women in that sorority (and this was a large sorority—70 or 80 women) were currently engaging in anorexic or bulimic behavior. We did what we could and in the process discovered some of the practices that were occurring in that sorority.

Before I go on with this story, please remember I was an officer in my fraternity as an undergraduate, and my wife was an officer in her sorority. I am, generally speaking, supportive of Greek life. What we found was that the pledging period, among other things, consisted of lining up women in a sorority suite, putting a bathroom scale in front of each of them, having them step on the scales, and not only telling them how much weight they had to lose, but where on their bodies they had to lose it. And in case you had a bad memory, you were marked on your body with a magic marker where you had to lose weight. That, in turn, was reinforced with what I would call a hazing pledge period that included group diets, group jogs, and other activities associated with body image. That sorority had created a very unhealthy environment for the women. It was absolutely alarming to me. I am happy to say that that sorority has turned things around, and I am also happy to say that several national sororities are taking the lead and dealing with this issue. It was absolutely astonishing to me that it could go to that extreme.

I think our theories about women in higher education and about women's student development have to help us understand and explain that kind of behavior and point us in some directions as to what to do about it. Carol Gilligan and others believe the concepts of autonomy and separation are indicative of male development and that female development is better explained through the concept of connectedness and relationships. O'Neill and Roberts-Carroll in a recent AACD journal article talked about "phases of a gender role journey" in which they argue that women go through successive stages beginning with acceptance of traditional gender roles, moving to ambivalence about gender roles, anger, activism, and finally celebration and integration of gender roles. Mary Belenky and others in their landmark work, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, also provide us with insights into women's development.

A third area we have to look at more carefully and more forthrightly is sexual orientation. There is an increased awareness by gays, lesbians, and bisexuals that their identity and development may be different from heterosexual students. We are seeing an increase in homophobic reactions, both attitudinally and behaviorally. Last year, our president decided that it was important for us to keep track of what our institution calls "acts of intolerance." Whenever something occurs in our environment at Penn State that is detrimental to minorities, women, and other groups, we have a reporting channel telling us what is going on. Of the cases that were reported, 70% of them were homophobic harassment. In Astin's current study, 50% of all freshmen believe homosexual relations should be prohibited. Here I would point to Vivian Cass who postulates six stages of development based on sexual orientation from identity confusion to identity synthesis.

Older students must also be taken into account, and you know the demographics here. By the year 2000, two out of five students will be over 25, three out of five will be over 21. In the next ten years, the 21 and under enrollment will stabilize at about 40% while the 22-34 age category will decline, and the over-35 crowd will increase to one in five students by the year 2000. In institutions where the student population is primarily adult, particularly in community colleges, the prognosis is good. At most other more traditional institutions, older students often feel isolated and ignored, patronized by faculty, and complain that services and programs are targeted at younger students. The irony here is when I sit down and talk to returning adults who are

coming back, they are scared about it. They say, "I sit in these classes and hear these young students who have just completed high school calculus, and know more than I do. I barely got through high school algebra 20 years ago, and it's a very stress-producing situation to be in a class with all those younger people." Then I turn around and talk to traditional-aged students, and they're "scared to death of those returning adults. They have all this experience, and they're only taking one class so they can study like mad and break the curve." It is an incredible relationship that these students seem to have, and we have got to get them together. I think that theoretically we are in pretty good shape here with Nancy Schlossburg, Patricia Cross, Malcolm Knowles, Carol Aslanian, Gerald Apps, and others' writings.

A point that I want to reinforce is that while we should be focusing on older students, minority students, and students who have different sexual orientations, to focus only on them is really a way of "blaming the victim." More recently, I have come across a couple of theories that say we not only have to look at the diversity of our students, but we also have to look at how mainstream majority students respond to minority students and students that they believe are different from them. Those of you who read the *Chronicle* know that we have experienced an increase in racial tension and other tensions between students based on their diversity. At a southern institution, arson destroyed a house being renovated by a black fraternity which was to be the first black house on an all-white fraternity row. At a West Coast institution, posters were defaced with racial epitaphs and stereotypical characters. A Pennsylvania institution, not Penn State, very reluctantly registered a student organization called "White Pride" which was formed to balance the pro-minority stance at the university in affirmative action activities. Again, looking at Sandy Astin's latest data, only about 30% of the freshmen surveyed considered promoting racial understanding to be an essential or very important objective.

I am intrigued by the work that's been done by Janet Helms who believes that majority group members, by virtue of their control of the economy and the cultural dimensions of our society, directly and adversely affect minority groups particularly in the early stages of their development. She argues that majority students go through various stages in the way in which they perceive minority students, from stereotyped images to what she calls the autonomy stage. This is a very interesting theory, particularly juxtaposed against some of the other stage theories of minority groups. If you assign a black student who is in an immersion stage and at the height of black pride and the stereotyping of whites to room with a white student who is stereotyping blacks, you are asking for trouble. When we put these theories together, we gain some insight into racial and ethnic relations.

There are a number of issues that our theories do not yet adequately explain. First and foremost are the changing family backgrounds and dynamics of our freshmen. Here Harold Hodgkinson predicts some things I don't think we are ready for. Nearly one in five freshmen in the year 2000 will have been born out of wedlock. Nearly one half will have been raised by single parents sometime during their childhood, and more freshmen will come from blended families. Only 40% of our freshmen in the year 2000 will come from families where the mother and father were together from the time they were born to the time they went away to college. Two in three freshmen will have mothers who work outside the home before they were school aged. One in five college women will have given birth to a child before she came to college.

These issues are already beginning to affect the freshmen that are enrolling at the present time. One of my responsibilities at Penn State is counseling and psychological services. Recently, I got a frantic call from the director saying, "You've got to get over here and talk to my staff. This fall, we have been swamped. We, in fact, saw a 40% increase in the number

of students seeking counseling services, many of them in crisis, many of them very seriously troubled. If you went to our counseling center at the end of October with what I would call a normal developmental problem ('I'm not getting along with my roommate,' 'I just got dumped by my boyfriend,' 'I just had a fight with my parents'), we couldn't see you because we were so swamped by students with more serious problems." I went over and talked with this very burned out counseling center staff and said, "Help me understand why—why all of a sudden we are beginning to see a far more stressed student population." I went over there scratching my head saying, "Maybe the grade pressure is greater, maybe there is something going on in our environment, maybe it's the pressures of society or whatever." They said one thing: dysfunctional families. For example, more students are seeking help because their families have an alcohol or substance abuse problem. Five years ago we tried to put together an adult children of alcoholics group in our counseling center, and nobody signed up. Now we can't create enough groups. We even have two groups of incest survivors. We have sexual assault groups. We do not have enough groups that deal with students with nutritional disorders. And all of these things really develop *prior* to coming to college. I don't think we have much of a theoretical basis for dealing with these issues. There is a great deal of emerging literature in the field of child psychology and family development, but nobody is connecting it with the transition between home and college. I am very concerned about that.

As I was going out the door on a recent Saturday, I talked to our counseling center director and said, "How's it going?" and he said, "It's worse than ever." He said, "We are no longer a counseling center, we're a crisis intervention center. We can barely keep up with keeping people alive, let alone doing any of what I would call helping normal students through normal developmental problems." At the same time, those of you in the counseling field know that the pressure to shorten therapy is great because of budget pressures. So, we are faced with a situation in our counseling services where the problems require more attention and a longer length of time to solve, while at the same time our resources are being stretched. It is not a good prognosis, and I don't think we have the theoretical basis for dealing with this situation at the moment.

A second group that I think we have to look at in far greater detail than we have in the past is part-time students. Some of this is covered through our work with older students; but if you look again at what Harold Hodgkinson is predicting, by the year 2000, two in five will be part-time students, maybe as many as half. There will be a significant decline of full-time students. There will be more off-site instruction and more students taking more than four years to graduate, more students coming back with degrees and getting further training and education. Yet, as I look at our student development theories, we don't really take into account people who are part-time students. Most of our research and theory is based on an intensive college experience. In fact, right at this moment, only two million out of 12 million postsecondary students in this country are full-time in residence and 18-22 years of age. In a lot of ways, we are ignoring a substantial majority of our students.

I want to end with what I hope will make sense to you. I encourage you to read the several theories that I have pointed to. There are three or four theoretical concepts that I draw upon when I am dealing with freshman students. They are old standbys, fairly simple and fairly direct. The first of these is Nevitt Sanford's support and challenge theory. Students are more likely to succeed in college when there is a balance between the support they receive in the collegiate environment and the challenge of that environment. Too much support leads to dependence and apathy, and too much challenge is overwhelming. Particularly in dealing with freshman students, we have to balance support and challenge constantly.

Second, I think Sandy Astin's involvement theory is helpful to us in helping us understand freshmen. He says students grow and develop best when they are involved in the collegiate environment—that is, when they devote a substantial amount of physical and psychological energy to their collegiate experience.

Third, there is a new book coming out by Nancy Schlossberg and Arthur Chickering in which they explore mattering and marginality theory. Freshmen must feel that they matter. They must believe that they make a difference. They must believe that others care about them. They must feel they belong. If not, they feel marginal. They will feel out of things. They will feel not accepted. They will feel the mainstream ignores them or, worse yet, discriminates against them. I think the concepts of mattering and marginality are good ones to help explain not only mainstream freshmen but all of the diverse subgroups as well. When all is said and done, I think caring and mattering is probably what it's all about.

I would like to end with a true story. I have a good friend who's a counselor in a counseling service at a major university. About a year and a half ago he was dealing with a very troubled student, one of those students whose troubles stem primarily from a very dysfunctional relationship with his father. My friend Roger was very worried about this student. It was pretty much a week to week, day to day proposition as to whether this person would try to kill himself or not. Roger established what he called a suicide contract. Some of you who are counselors know about this technique. Roger was seeing this student one day, and it was a particularly troublesome session. The student had been particularly mournful of his father with whom he had a great deal of difficulty. Many of the student's problems were associated with that dysfunctional relationship; his father had died about a month before, and he was particularly despondent. Roger said to him, "Look, I want you to promise me that you will not harm yourself intentionally or unintentionally or harm anybody else intentionally or unintentionally for the next year." The student said, "I can't do that." He said, "OK, I want you to promise me that you will not harm yourself or anybody else intentionally or unintentionally for the next month." The student said, "I don't think I can." Roger said, "I want you to repeat after me. I will not," and the student repeated after him, "harm myself intentionally or unintentionally for the next week until I see you again." The student thought and finally said, "OK, I can say that." The student came back the next week and said,

> I think I owe you my life. Saturday night I had a few beers. I got very despondent again about all of my troubles and how much I missed my father and how much I have to unravel the issues associated with my dad. I went to my father's grave. I lay down on the grave and put a gun to my head, and I said, 'Dad, I'm coming home.' Then, another voice was heard in my head, and I heard me promising you not to harm myself intentionally or unintentionally until I see you again.

He went on to say that Roger was the reason he was still alive. If you don't think mattering makes a difference and if you don't think caring makes a difference, please remember that story. When caring is communicated to students with compassion and love and concern, we have done what we need to do for freshman students.

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TODAY'S FRESHMAN: A PUZZLE AND A CHALLENGE

By Alexander W. Astin

Plenary Address
The Freshman Year
Experience Conference
Irvine, California
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I have a great affinity for people who are interested in the freshman year experience. When I decided I was not going to make it as a musician and went into psychology, my first strong interest was in the undergraduate and particularly the new undergraduate and what that experience means to students. I think we have learned an enormous amount over the last couple of decades about that experience and about how to give it more impact and more meaning.

As some of you know, for the last 23 years I have been involved in surveying the incoming freshmen at a national sample of colleges and universities of all types across the country. Each of these surveys involves about a quarter of a million students and about six hundred institutions. When we take these surveys, (the 23rd one was just completed last fall), and string the results together, it is possible to generate a very interesting and informative portrait of how American college freshmen have been changing.

When we first started doing these surveys, our intent was not to do one every year. We wanted to study the freshmen and the sophomores and the later years and to follow these students over periods of time to see how their college experiences affected their development. We have done many of these follow-ups and have written books and so forth reporting the findings. But after doing so many freshman surveys, it began to dawn on us that we have a kind of a social indicator—that is, a barometer or a measure of the climate in the society as revealed in the plans, attitudes, and beliefs of the new crop of freshmen. When you take these first 23 years and string them together, you see something that is both fascinating as well as potentially disturbing. The scholar in me is fascinated by the challenge that these trends represent to my theoretical and interpretive skills, but the educator in me is disturbed by how these trends might be affecting our higher education system and indeed what part we in the academy might have played in bringing these trends about in the first place.

Today I would like first to review with you some of the findings from our most recent survey. Second, I would like to speculate on what these results might mean and what we might want to do about them, if anything.

First of all, let's take a look at how students' career plans, study plans, and major field plans have been changing in the last 23 years. The real bold market in freshman interest has been in business careers. Student interest in business careers has more than doubled during the course of our survey. There have been a few years in which surveys have shown a slight decline in numbers of students intending to major in business, including the current survey, but basically this trend has been moving up and up. As a matter of fact, there really isn't any other field that has shown such a uniform and continuous increase in popularity. The other fields have either gone down consistently or have waxed and waned in popularity. If you look at this from the standpoint of gender, you can see that women have shown by far the most dramatic surge of interest in business.

Since the 1960s, the career that has contributed most of these people to the field of business has been school teaching, primarily at the secondary level. The decline in numbers of students interested in teaching has been catastrophic. It bottomed out in 1982, interestingly enough, close to the time of the release of a report from the National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk*, and the burgeoning interest in education that followed as a national political issue. I suspect the slight recovery of student interest in teaching careers has been spurred on in part by this growing national consciousness of the importance of education.

In the late 1960s, a substantial proportion of students pursuing teaching careers majored in fields outside of education. What this means is that in those days we were getting a lot of students from the more academic fields who intended to become school teachers. Currently, it would appear that virtually all of the students pursuing teaching careers are majoring in education. This, of course, is contrary to the conventional wisdom of contemporary critics of teacher education who contend that a significant problem affecting education is that teachers today don't know their subject matter as well as they should. I might say that while that argument has great rhetorical appeal, there is not a shred of research evidence to support the argument that majoring in a discipline makes you a better teacher. It just happens to be part of current conventional wisdom.

What about higher education teaching careers? This is another bare market. Interest in teaching at the college level has declined proportionately just as sharply as interest in secondary school teaching. Interest in careers in scientific research has decreased almost as rapidly and as sharply. Many people, when confronted with the choice between being a professor or a researcher, will choose a research career, and we know that many researchers work in universities. The reduction of interest in research careers does not bode well for science. In fact, student interest in science is at the lowest point in the history of the survey, but so is student interest in the arts, humanities, and the social sciences. Business is picking it all up. Along with some of the preprofessional fields, business is taking all the traffic.

What about technology? Technology has shown a roller-coaster career. Engineering is always very volatile as a career choice and has always had its ups and downs. But these days, interest in engineering as a career is down. Also, the computer fad reversed itself very fast. What we have then is a decline in interest during recent years in every field of science and technology. The National Science Foundation is beginning to worry about these trends. In a nutshell, the liberal arts in general as well as the sciences have been experiencing a bare market as business has picked up more and more students.

So much for careers and majors. What about the students' values, attitudes, and beliefs—the affective side of students—what do we find here? Two student values have been going in opposite directions in recent years: the value of developing a meaningful philosophy of life and the value of being very well off financially. In fact, these values have traded places during the last 20 years. Developing a meaningful philosophy of life used to be the number one value among college freshmen. Of this list of 15 or 20 values, it is currently down to ninth or tenth on the list. Being *very* well off financially is now number one. (I emphasize the *very* because one year we left this word out, and it completely blew the data.) It is possible that wanting to make a lot of money and to be rich and famous might obviate the need to develop a philosophy of life. The making of money has become, in fact, a kind of philosophy of life in itself in our society, if you can judge by what's going on with defense contractors, Wall Streeters, and even members of the executive branch of government.

What about other values? Our survey shows declines over time in such values as altruistic pursuits, serving the community, and cleaning up the environment. Most of the values showing increased student interest are related to money, power, and status. Although values have changed for both males and females, the changes can be attributed proportionately more to women than to men. Women's values more closely resemble men's values than was the case 20 years ago. There is an interesting sidelight to this which you might lament: freshman men and women are much more alike then they used to be. But on a positive note, the possibilities of developing real genuine relationships that transcend purely

sexual relationships seem to be greater than than they have ever been. The students have more in common now than ever before.

This year, in particular, it began to dawn on us that we were seeing another emerging pattern that we believe is related to the questions having to do with careers and values—that is, that students are becoming more competitive. An example of this competitiveness is the number of applications to college that students are now completing. Submission of multiple applications has been going up steadily for a number of years but jumped rapidly this past fall. Compared to the 1960s, there are 50 to 60% more students submitting five or more college applications. Even so, we find that fewer and fewer students are reporting that they are able to get into their first-choice college. In other words, their aspirations are going up, and their realization of these aspirations is going down.

When we ask students, in a series of questions, why they are going to college in the first place, we find their answers are highly consistent with their overall response patterns. One such question has to do with the purpose of college as "gaining a general education and appreciation of ideas"—a sort of "liberal education" kind of goal; and the other one is "the ability to make more money." Again, these values have traded places over the past 20 years in students' rationales for going to college in the first place.

Competitiveness also seems to be affecting degree aspirations. Aspirations for doctoral degrees hit an all time high this year in spite of the fact that career choices for which the doctorate is most appropriate, (i.e., research scientist, college teacher), are at the bottom of the list of student preferences. Getting the terminal degree is part of the overall desire for status. In addition, aspirations for masters and law degrees reached an all time high with the current crop of freshmen.

What does all this add up to? What we are seeing are students who are very competitive, who are striving for top colleges and graduate degrees, and who want to be very well off financially, and consequently, who are feeling more stressed than ever. A survey question asks students how often they "frequently feel depressed." Here we noticed that there was a jump this year. Depression is a factor for both men and women, but the women reported more frequent depression than the men. The survey asks a similar question about "frequently feeling overwhelmed by all I have to do." We found a similar jump this fall. Again the women almost doubled the stress levels reported by the men. One final peculiar thing we noticed is that, after many years of decline, there was a sudden increase this year in the percentage of students who reported that they smoked cigarettes frequently. The research on smoking shows that it can be an indicator of stress. Again the sexes have switched positions, and women are reporting more frequent smoking.

We think that another indirect indicator of student stress is the increasing student reliance on financial aid. What we have noticed is that Pell Grant participation has steadily declined. Because Pell Grant eligibility requirements were not adjusted for inflation, many students were artificially moved out of Pell Grant eligibility. These students must rely now on loans or other forms of assistance and are experiencing the stress of increasing debt.

So far I have been talking about the past, especially the recent past; but since we are all concerned about the future here, what I would like to address now is the question of whether we in the higher education community can or should try to do anything about these trends. In this connection, I am a strong believer in active forecasting. We are not just passive observers of the scene. We are the scene, and if higher education is going to make changes, we have to be the change agents. Perhaps the best way to talk about how we can influence

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the shape of things to come is to talk about our own values. I would like to speak about a favorite topic of mine, the topic of excellence.

Each of us, no matter what our job is in higher education, has some concept of what constitutes an excellent educational institution. For the last decade, I have been arguing that our traditional notions about excellence, those that are most widely accepted, do not serve us well. These are the reputational or resource approaches. Reputational approaches equate excellence with our rankings in polls that are done by such publications as *U.S. News and World Report*. Resource approaches equate excellence with such things as endowment, average faculty salaries, research grants, and, of all things, the SATs or the ACTs of our entering freshmen. In this final variable, freshmen themselves are being regarded as a resource. And, of course, these traditional views of resources and reputation are mutually reinforcing. If an institution has abundant resources, this enhances its reputation; and if an institution has a great reputation, such a reputation helps to bring in resources.
The reason that higher education is served poorly by such definitions of excellence is that they don't deal with the basic mission of higher education: educating the student. I have argued that we ought to replace these conceptions with what I call the "talent development" conception of excellence which argues that true excellence resides in our ability to have a positive impact on students by maximizing their intellectual and personal development. In talent development terms, an excellent institution is one that develops the abilities of its students to the fullest extent.

In certain respects, these different views of excellence offer an interesting parallel to the changing pattern of freshman interests and values. The reputation and resource views, for example, parallel the increasing student interest in money, power, status, and careers in business. In contrast, the talent development view parallels student concern for others, for the society, and for careers in human service occupations.

What I am really talking about here is our world view, our concept of who we are and what our place in the world is. The more I think about these issues, the more I'm tempted to conclude that there are two fundamentally different world views that we can adopt in looking at educational issues. For simplicity, let's call these the competitive view and the cooperative view of human nature. It is increasingly apparent to me that many of the issues that plague higher education these days can be better understood in terms of this cooperative/competitive framework. Let's take, for example, the conceptions of excellence. The reputational approach is inherently competitive since it fosters competition among institutions for higher and higher places in the pecking order. The most obvious manifestation of our competition takes place in the resource arena where we compete for finite resources such as highly talented students, prestigious faculty, and money. If my institution can improve its position in the pecking order by recruiting some of your faculty stars or National Merit finalists, then your position in the pecking order is proportionately reduced. It's a zero sum game.

Even within an institution, the reputation and resource view tends to breed competition. Academic departments compete with each other over FTEs and other resources; academic personnel compete with student affairs personnel over a finite resource pie; and trustees and administrators compete with faculty for control over resource allocation decisions. Claims for larger shares of the resources are inevitably buttressed by arguments about maintaining or enhancing excellence for quality. In short, it appears that the reputation/resource view is a manifestation of a competitive world view. The talent development approach, on the other hand, symbolizes a very different value perspective. In this view, we are all sharing a common purpose in trying to maximize the educational and personal development of our students. When one of us exceeds in this mission, this, in no way, limits or constrains what any of the rest of us

can do. Indeed, we can cooperatively exchange intelligence about how to get a job done and have what amounts to a win/win situation.

What is particularly ironic about all this competitiveness is that the very institution that would, by its nature, seem to be the most competitive, (I'm speaking here of American business), has been talking a lot recently about cooperation. Recent research suggests that one of the most striking features of an effectively managed business organization is its capacity for getting employees to work cooperatively toward common organizational goals. Organizations view uncontrolled competition among employees as potentially destructive, particularly when it discourages team work. The key ingredient to a truly cooperative work environment, of course, is a sense of trust among employees at all levels of the organization.

In my judgment, the capacity to be a good team member and to work cooperatively with co-workers should be one of the basic skills that we try to develop in our freshman year programs. Even in an academic setting, these qualities are becoming increasingly important. The expanding knowledge base, for example, has served to intensify competition among disciplines for a piece of the curricular action. It seems to me that the need for a cooperative approach has never been greater; and in many respects, the freshman year is the ideal time to explore value issues such as cooperation versus competition or materialism versus spiritualism.

Each of us here could think of ways in which the lower division curriculum and co-curriculum could be modified to help students learn more about cooperation. What about the curriculum itself? We talk a lot about basic skills, but usually we're talking about communication skills such as speaking and writing. How often do we talk about the art of good listening? This neglected skill has not only great practical importance, but it also epitomizes for me the essence of the cooperative spirit. Most of us are inclined to forget that the curricular content represents only a small portion of the values education that goes on during the freshman year and that most of our important teaching may be independent of course content. This implicit curriculum, as I have called it in earlier writing, includes the process of establishing a curriculum, how we go about doing that, the teaching methods we use, how we grade and test our students, how we run our institutions, and how we treat each other as professional colleagues.

Let us first look at how we go about establishing a curriculum. In an effort to give freshmen a broad exposure to the liberal arts, typical general education requirements treat the different academic disciplines as discreet, autonomous fields of knowledge and inquiry, a little of this and a little of that. With the rapidly expanding knowledge base and the proliferation of fields and specialized subfields, the process involved in setting these general education requirements is often highly confrontational, and final decisions are made usually on a political rather than an educational basis. These strong interdepartmental rivalries are also acted out in the classroom with the hard scientists disparaging the social scientists and the humanists disparaging the engineers, and so on.

Even within departments, subspecialities often criticize and compete with each other. In my own field of psychology, for example, there is what seems like an almost unsolvable rift between the clinicians and the experimentalists. Students hear about this in introductory psychology courses. Empathy and cooperation are also absent in the way we deliver the curriculum. Core requirements are pretty much rammed down students' throats without much regard for individual differences; and, of course, most importantly, advising gets very low weight, if any, in the personnel review process. That is, we faculty are certainly not promoted on the basis of our ability to advise or mentor students. So the choices

and problems that students confront are not something to which we attach value.

What about pedagogical technique? Most freshman courses, especially in larger universities, still use the traditional lecture format. The national reform reports on higher education, as most of you know, have been strongly critical of this traditional mode of instruction because it restricts students to a passive role, thereby reducing their involvement and inhibiting the learning process. Sole reliance on the lecture has other deficiencies. It leads the freshman to view learning as a solitary process where each works independently of the other. Indeed, not only do students work independently, but they are also encouraged to compete with one another. What is more regrettable about this heavy dependence on the traditional lecture format is that it ignores a growing body of research on cooperative learning which shows that models where students teach others and work together on joint projects actually produce better learning outcomes for all students, in particular, the underprepared student. In cooperative learning, students view each other as helpers rather then as competitors.

This emphasis on competition is reinforced by the grading system, which is basically a comparative relativistic system. The practice of grading on the curve really doesn't tell us much about what an individual student has learned. It merely tells us where that student stands in relation to others. Limitations of competitive classroom learning are compounded by the fact that we professors have to grade as well as teach our students.

What about collegial relations? Although students normally don't participate in personnel actions, they know how we rate each other. They know the basis on which we grade and evaluate each other; and, of course, they discover that collegiality gets very little weight in the personnel review process. In effect, what we are telling students by the prevailing model of personnel assessment is that cooperation with colleagues is of little importance. The implicit message is that what is really important is how much you, as an individual, are able to develop your professional career and status primarily through publishing and secondarily through teaching.

The point I am trying to make is that there is no way we can shield our freshmen from the value implications of how we run our institutions and how we treat each other as colleagues. When we talk about cooperation or about the students' values and beliefs, we are, of course, dealing with what I like to call affective outcomes. Educators have tended to shy away from discussing these outcomes because they are supposedly too value laden. However, the very act of selecting a curriculum is itself a value judgment, and if you doubt that, recall the recent flap over the Stanford curriculum.

Take the time to read through a few college catalogues, and you will find that the most important intended outcomes of a liberal education are often affective outcomes, such as good citizenship and character. The very idea of good citizenship in a democracy like ours necessarily includes the notion of an informed and involved electorate. Democracy is, I might add, based fundamentally upon a cooperative concept of governance. Yet the recent presidential election suggests to me that our citizenry is probably not very well informed and certainly not very involved in the democratic process. If I were able to effect just one change in our formal curriculum and our implicit curriculum, it would be to put much greater emphasis on the importance of producing graduates who appreciate the importance of being well-informed, active participants in the democratic process and on training teachers for the primary schools who believe in these ideals and can communicate them to their students.

Some of our higher education policymakers and leaders have become concerned recently about the extreme competitiveness of our

incoming freshmen (and our other students for that matter) and institutional competitiveness. These leaders are openly advocating a greater emphasis on promoting cooperation, good citizenship, and other affective outcomes. The Campus Compact project is just one obvious example of this concern. Even Derek Bok, in a recent address to the Harvard Board of Overseers, said basically that the university should be among the first to reaffirm basic values such as honesty, promise-keeping, free expression, and non-violence and that there is nothing odd or inappropriate in making these values the foundation for a serious program to help students develop a strong set of moral standards. Bok is giving us all permission, if you will, to attend to these issues. These trends would suggest that our political and higher education leaders are suggesting implicitly that social responsibility and concern for others are qualities that we in the higher education community should try to foster in our students.

I might add that in our assessment of student outcomes, which is a topic of concern at most of the conferences I have attended recently, we ought to be concerned about affective outcomes. We have tried for too long to deal with only one piece of the student in our assessment. It seems to me that it is time to begin looking directly at our students' values. As I look around, I see the great achievements of the intellect: atomic energy, genetic engineering, modern agriculture, modern medicine, computers, and electronic marvels. At the same time, I see the great affective, emotional, and spiritual divisions that threaten our very existence: religious fanaticism and hatred, racial prejudice, nationalism and other political divisiveness, widespread criminal behavior in the land of opportunity, and massive poverty and starvation in the face of unprecedented affluence. What this tells me is that it's time to readdress the balance. It's time to begin shifting some of our educational interests and energy in the direction of the affective side, to begin concerning ourselves much more directly with the development of beliefs and values that are going to heal our divisions and help create a society that is less materialistic, competitive, and selfish and is more generous and cooperative.

Let me close by returning once again to our different conceptions of excellence. In the long run, the kind of actual curriculum and implicit curriculum that we create for our freshmen will depend heavily upon our values. During my earlier incarnation as a clinical psychologist, I probably would have labeled the reputational and resource views as egocentric approaches to excellence in the sense that they emphasize what possessions our institutions have and what others think of us. By contrast, under a talent development view, we identify our institutions in terms of what they do, what they contribute to the students' development, and what the students, in turn, contribute to their communities. In other words, by adopting a talent development perspective, we, in effect, transcend our institutional egos to some extent and begin to view ourselves more in terms of how we impact society.

The basic point to be made here is a relatively simple one: when an institution exists primarily for its own sake and when it identifies itself primarily in terms of its resources and reputation, its relationship to the society that it is supposed to serve becomes exploitive and defensive; and its capacity to serve as an instrument for social change is compromised. In short, the biggest obstacle to higher education's service as an instrument for societal improvement is institutional ego. In a sense, colleges and universities need to learn how to transcend their egos, at least to an extent, and to become involved more actively in what is going on in the society. This notion of transcendence, of course, is a frequent theme in psychological theories. When I was doing psychotherapy, I was continually made aware of the fact that my ability to help a troubled patient was limited to the extent that I let my own ego become a prominent part of the therapeutic process. In other words, I was

limited in my capacity to help a patient grow to the extent that patient's dependency on, or respect, admiration, and awe of me became a central feature in the relationship. What I really had to do was to transcend that part of the therapy to put myself in a more empathic position to understand how the patient felt.

How do we go about transcending our institutional egos? It seems to me that the first thing we need to begin to do is to ask ourselves about our own values. To what definitions of excellence do we subscribe? How is that reflected in our daily work? To what kinds of implicit curricula do we expose our freshmen? How is such exposure affecting their values and attitudes? What kinds of citizens and what kinds of parents will our students make? Are they becoming more humane, more honest, and more concerned with the welfare of others? Are they becoming more active and better informed participants in the democratic process? If those of us who work with freshman students could succeed in persuading our faculty and administrative colleagues to begin seeking answers to such questions, we would be taking a major step on the road toward institutional transcendence.

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CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS - PREPARING FRESHMAN STUDENTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By Reginald Wilson

Keynote Address
Annual National Conference on
The Freshman Year Experience
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In the year 1903, William Edward Burkhart Dubois proclaimed that the problem of the 20th century would be the color line. Viewing the weak beginnings of the rise of nationalism in the colonized territories of Africa and Asia, he was not only prophetic of the 20th century and its most intransigent problem, but he was also predicting the increasing relevance of that problem for the 21st century, which will be upon us in a few short years. We face rising unrest in Central and South America. We have a military presence in the Persian Gulf, in Asia, and around the world. We send relief to starving millions in Africa, whom we ultimately expect to be consumers of our goods. We are in fierce competition with the Pacific Rim countries of Japan, Taiwan, Korea, and Singapore for technological leadership in computers, superconductors, and manufacturing. Indeed, we are an integral and important part of a worldwide economic system whose members are increasingly brown, black, and yellow.

We have been blessed in our own country by not having fought a war on these shores in over a century since our own Civil War. While the rest of the world has been devastated by two incredibly destructive world wars, several smaller wars, and by the resulting loss of lives and property, not a single bomb has dropped on any of our mainland population. As a result, our sense of the suffering of others in this world has been blunted by the lack of that personal and immediate experience. Yes, we have sent men overseas, and some have come back maimed, and some have not come back. But we have been spared destruction of our land, and we have been able to prosper and go forward as a nation to become *the* leading world power since the Second World War.

Despite our best efforts, our country is beginning rapidly to look like the rest of the world in ethnic complexion. Despite our best efforts, we are beginning to resemble the world we always thought was over there. I deliberately say 'despite our best efforts' because we do not like to be reminded of the uglier side of our history as a nation. We imported Chinese laborers to build our railroads in the West from 1840-1882. With the rising tide of "yellow peril" sentiments and the anger of poor whites at what they perceived as the threat of cheap foreign labor, we passed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. With various fluctuations in the implementation of that law, the 1924 Immigration Act finally forbade all Asian entry into this country until 1943 when that pernicious act was ultimately rescinded. We kept extremely tight restrictions on immigration from Asia, Africa, and the Carribean, while immigration quotas from Europe were going unfilled. We are now trying to stem the tide of brown people pouring into Texas and California, and our latest hair-brained scheme is to dig a ditch along the Mexican border to somehow prevent or control illegal entry of immigrants.

Despite our best efforts, the United States is becoming a microcosm of the world that we live in. Of the world's five billion people, only about one billion are white. By the year 2000, one third of the American population will be non-white, and the fastest population growth in the next century will be among people of color. Yet we are not adequately preparing our American young people for the world that is rapidly approaching, and much of the tension and conflict in our own society is a result of our abdication of responsibility in fostering that preparation. Look at our cities. Of the 25 largest cities in the United States, all have public school systems in which the majority of students are non-white. Look at our states. Hawaii is predominately non-white; and within the next ten years, California will be also. The future is gaining on us.

To our credit as a nation, when events have become startlingly critical, we have responded. We did indeed end slavery in 1863, but we were the last Western nation to do so.

We did end legal segregation of the races in 1954, and we were the last Western nation to do so. We did integrate our armed services, and we were the only Western nation that had segregated them in the first place. We did extend the vote to women in 1920, and we were among the last Western nations to do so. We have often only acted as a nation after events of great crisis have nearly overwhelmed us. We have often not prepared our people for the consequences of those actions; and this lack of preparation has usually resulted in more societal disruption, ethnic and racial conflict, as well as agonizing death and destruction. We are now facing a similar period of conflict and change on our college and university campuses; and, again, we find our young people unprepared, confused, angry, uncertain, and unclear about the social and demographic upheaval occurring in their world. Sadly their leaders, both nationally and on campuses, are giving them no clear direction.

In the past, The Freshman Year Experience has emphasized the programs and practices necessary to make the first critical year a successful and rewarding experience for college students academically and socially. I would suggest, based on the disquieting increase in incidences of racial violence on college campuses and the declining presence of black and Hispanic students on those campuses, that we have a more urgent responsibility to prepare our students for the multicultural world of the 21st century; because ready or not, here it comes.

Each year for the past seven years, the American Council on Education and its Office of Minority Concerns have issued an annual status report on minorities in higher education. We have been doing so to document the trends in higher education enrollments and the declining participation rates of blacks and Hispanics, and to relate these data to the past history and the predicted future of minorities in American higher education, assuming that present trends continue. The post Civil War history of race relations in this country can be very quickly and grossly oversimplified by dividing it into three periods: the first from reconstruction to 1954, the second extending through two decades from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s, and the third from the mid-1970s to the present.

Before 1954, America was a racially divided society separated by law and sanctioned by the courts. Beginning with the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, two decades of steady incremental progress in civil rights ensued. Some of the landmarks of these decades include the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Higher Education Amendments of 1965, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the Age Discrimination Act, Section 504 protecting the rights of the handicapped, Title IX extending institutional protection to women, the Adams decision desegregating Southern colleges, and the Pell Grant legislation for student support. Even opponents of civil rights recognized the clarity of the messages from Congress and the courts and resigned themselves to obeying the law. Since the mid-1970s, we have witnessed a decade of civil rights decline, a decade of equivocation on civil rights by the courts and Congress, eight years of outright opposition to affirmative action, and even attempts to provide tax exempt status for segregated schools. The message has been clear, and we can measure the consequences of the resulting retrogression in real statistical terms.

There are more blacks living below the poverty line now than there were in 1980. Black medium income as a percentage of white income declined from 61% in 1976 to 57% in 1986. Hispanic medium income as a proportion of white income declined from 69% in 1976 to 65% in 1986. The income of black 20 to 24-year-olds fell by 50% between 1976 and 1986, from $9,818 to $5,299. The percentage of blacks not immunized by polio has increased by 50% between 1980 and 1985, and the black infant mortality rate has increased since 1985, the first time there was such an increase in 20 years.

The one item of good news in that litany of dismal statistics is the increase in minority high school graduation rates during the same period, despite the negative socioeconomic indicators. From 1976 to 1986, black high school graduation rates increased from 67.5% to 76.6%. Hispanic high school graduation rates increased from 55.6% to 59.9%, and the high school graduation rates for American Indians increased to 55%. At the same time, during the same decade, college enrollment of blacks declined from 33.4% to 28.6%, enrollment of Hispanics declined from 35.8% to 29.4%, and only 17% of American Indians are attending college. In 1970, black faculty constituted 4.4% of faculty; in 1985 this figure dropped to 4.2%.

The crisis of minority decline in societal participation is as much a perceptual as a real problem, and indeed it is a real problem. When the Kerner Commission Report of over 20 years ago said that America is becoming two societies, white and black, it did not mean just in real measurable terms but in terms of perception as well. For example, in 1988 the NAACP legal defense fund commissioned a study of racial attitudes. The results of this study were reported three weeks ago, and they clearly documented that blacks and whites live in two different societies relative to their perceptions of racial justice in America.

For example, in response to the question, "Do blacks have equal opportunity to whites in American society?" 58% of whites, but only 28% of blacks, say yes. Taking just one example of equal opportunity—the college professoriate—a 1988 study done by the Southern Education Foundation documents that, even when controlling for terminal degree, research, and scholarly productivity, blacks systematically achieve tenure and rank at lower rates than whites in every field and, on average, have lower salaries in every field. When asked if blacks are treated equally by the criminal justice system, 50% of whites say yes, 80% of blacks say no. Research done by the Urban Institute documents that blacks are arrested more for the same crime, receive longer jail terms for the same crime, and receive the death penalty more frequently for the same crime. When asked if blacks receive equal health care, 45% of whites say yes, 70% of blacks say no.

Data reveal that over 30% of blacks but only 9% of whites are not covered by any form of health insurance. When asked if blacks are paid less for equal work, 69% of whites say no, while 66% of blacks say yes. Studies done of labor force participation show that whites earn more than blacks at every job level. Moreover, at every educational level, whites earn more than blacks at the next higher level. For example, white high school dropouts earn more than black high school graduates.

On campuses, perceptions of racial problems are equally divergent. Only 30% of whites on campuses perceive that there are any racial problems, while 66% of minorities are aware of racial problems on campus. Majority and minority students on the same campus live in two different worlds. It is not just that one perception differs from another; it is that one set of perceptions is wrong, and another is right. However, actions are based on perceptions rather than reality. It is difficult to mobilize American society and the higher education community to the magnitude of a crisis when a large percentage of the population perceives that no crisis exists.

In a climate that deliberately or by default says non-whites are less valued in our society, it is little wonder that we now see the resurgence of behaviors deemed unacceptable on our campuses for over 15 years. Just last October at Smith College, anonymous notes with racial slurs were put under the dormitory doors of black students. Similar slurs were broadcast over a two-way radio at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the scene of previous racial violence in 1986. Three fraternities and three sororities at De Paul University held a ghetto party with racist graffiti decorating the fraternity house. At Stanford University,

racist flyers were posted in the dormitory, and two white students admitted responsibility for the acts. We may be educating our best and brightest to survive the freshman year. However, we are not educating them to be decent human beings in a multicultural society.

Each fall, The American Council on Education does a campus trends survey. The 1988 survey documented that the majority of campuses report increased freshman enrollments since 1980. Indeed, 70% expect enrollments to continue to increase during the next five years. Only 25% of campuses expect any minority enrollment increase, and 66% rate their own performance in recruiting minorities from poor to fair. One may conclude that on most campuses recruiters have resigned themselves to doing poorly with minority recruitment, and they are not particularly disturbed by the consequences.

Similarly with faculty, 51% of campuses report increases in faculty hiring, but only 25% report any increases in numbers of minority faculty. Despite dire predictions of massive retirements of faculty during the 1990s, few campuses have been motivated to mount aggressive campaigns to train and recruit large numbers of minority scholars.

For the first time since 1973, the number of new black Ph.D.s has fallen below 1,000. In 1986, for example, United States graduate schools awarded only 820 Ph.D.s to blacks. During the same year, United States graduate schools awarded 5,539 Ph.D.s to foreign students, most of whom will return to their home countries to boost technological excellence. In 1987, the number of black doctorates awarded had fallen even further to 765, nearly 50% lower than the peak of 1,300 in the 1970s. The climate for social progress in the 1980s is markedly different from that of the 1960s. In the 1960s, resources were expanding and national leadership was progressive. In the 1980s, resources are declining, and there is less desire to expand opportunity.

The American Council on Education and the Higher Education Research Institute of UCLA also do an annual student survey which documents changes in student attitudes and perceptions. Recognizing that tuitions have doubled in the past decade with greater student competition for prestigious university slots, the survey noted these concerns: a rise in student stress as manifested by increased smoking, increased mental health referrals, and increased student suicides; greater competition for prestigious schools; an influx of minorities on some campuses with no planning for their presence on these campuses resulting in an increase in resentment and frustration on the part of white students; student resentment of equal opportunity programs and of services to "undeserving" or "unqualified" students.

A rise in the number of racial incidents on college campuses has been documented by the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence. In 1988, we documented 164 such incidents. Increased assaults on Hispanics and Asians have occurred as well, and the Anti-Defamation League has documented increased incidents of anti-Semitism on campus. Our best and brightest are showing their bigotry.

It was in these sets of circumstances in 1987 that the American Council on Education and the Education Commission of the States formed the National Commission on Minorities in Education and American Life in recognition of the fact that a continuation of these negative trends would seriously affect the viability of American society both domestically and internationally. By the year 2000, minorities will be one third of the American population. The United States economy is dependent upon a full-time employed work force. United States technological leadership is dependent upon maximum college training of all its citizens. It is in the national economic self-interest to make maximum the education and economic viability of minorities, or the entire nation will suffer.

The American Council on Education and the Education Commission of the States, under the co-chairmanship of former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, issued its report *One Third of A Nation* on May 23, 1988, and laid down seven challenges to American leadership and to higher education. Those challenges were

1. Higher education must increase the retention, the recruitment, and the graduation of minority students.

2. The American economy must be stimulated so that there will be growth to fund the development of these programs.

3. Our elected leaders must take leadership in these efforts rather than thwart them as we have seen them doing in the past several years.

4. The private sector must expand its support for minority programs.

5. We must develop a new vision of affirmative action particularly in light of recent decisions of the Supreme Court. We must find ways in society that we can achieve equity and social justice even if we cannot depend upon our leading institutions to do so.

6. Minority organizations and institutions themselves must be part of that expanded leadership to improve the status of minorities in American society.

7. Educational leaders must cooperate at all levels, both from K-12 through higher education and graduate schools.

Those challenges have evidently energized a number of persons in the society. We have distributed copies of the *One Third of A Nation* statement to all of the member presidents of the American Council on Education and to all members of Congress, and have held subsequent meetings with President Bush. Now having issued that statement--if you will, that clarion call to the nation--the American Council on Education felt, in its leadership role in higher education, that it must also give specific direction to the higher education community itself. And in that regard, a document that we have been working on for the past two years was recently issued last month, a handbook called *Minorities on Campus*, published in January 1989.

That handbook is now on the desk of every college president in the country. In that handbook, we attempt to identify comprehensive strategies for developing programs for establishing goals and strategies to deal with the whole panoply of concerns that affect minorities on campus. Some of these concerns include undergraduate student recruitment and retention, graduate education, faculty, curriculum, the teaching/learning environment, and the campus climate. There will be several thousand copies of the handbook available for distribution to educators around the country. The following are two unstated premises upon which the handbook was developed.

The first premise is that in the past, especially in the 1960s when we were genuinely attempting to achieve belated social justice in an historically racist society, we felt the problem had simply been the exclusion of non-whites from our excellent institutions. We assumed the institutions themselves were fine. It was people of color who needed fixing in order to make them acceptable in that new age of access. Therefore, we added on programs to our excellent institutions to assist that process. We have learned in the past two decades, as we have seen the gains of that era reverse themselves and many of those programs disappear, that without fundamental change in the inner precincts of the academy, those gains which occurred were peripheral and easily lost. And, more importantly, the

absence of people of color from those institutions meant that a presumption of excellence was illusory.

Indeed, I agree with Donna Shalala, Chancellor of the Madison campus of the University of Wisconsin, who said in a recent issue of *Change* Magazine, "I do not believe that first-class educational institutions can be first-class unless they reflect the larger population of society or unless they prepare students for a multi-ethnic, multicultural world." Most educators don't believe that, but it is inspiring to hear Donna Shalala say it. When my daughter was small, she would listen to the radio or watch television and see some outrageous statements made by bigots, and she would ask me, "Do they really believe that?" I would say, "Well honey, you have to use the 'midnight in the basement' test to determine that." What that means is that if an individual at midnight in the basement all alone can say "I really believe what I said," then perhaps it is true. I suspect that there are some people who cannot say that to themselves, but there are many who can. I believe Donna Shalala and what she is achieving at Madison because what she is doing demonstrates measurably that her words are not rhetoric. Secretary of Education Dr. Lauro Cavazos said in a recent speech at the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta, "I've come to a somewhat radical conclusion. I've come to the conclusion that more black and Hispanic youngsters don't finish college because we have not expected them to." In order for genuine and permanent equality and diversity to occur in our institutions of higher learning, we must, at midnight in the basement, say to ourselves, as Benjamin Bloom has been saying for over thirty years, "Ninety-five percent of all children are capable of mastery learning." And then in the morning, we must be about the business of transforming our institutions to achieve both excellence and diversity.

The second premise upon which our handbook is based is the necessity for the academy to make its operational values congruent with its philosophical values. A major component in the current very vocal and cacophonous quarrel over maintaining the purity of the canon is whether the academy should limit the curriculum to the study of Western Civilization, or sully it by the introduction of literary and philosophical works of non-Western cultures.

One of the strongest arguments and defense of the purity of the canon, most recently stated by a philosopher in the latest issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, is that it was the West which created democracy, Judeo-Christian values, and modern industrial technology. All of that is very true. However, seldom have I heard a defendent of the canon acknowledge that the West also created world-wide slavery, the colonization of people in their own lands, two devastating world wars, the atrocities of the holocaust, and the possibility of ending all life on this planet. It is not that I am unmoved by the lyrical prose of Shakespeare or the eternal verities of the Bible; it is that I am appalled by the behavior of those who espouse those values. Now, I hasten to add that I am not just describing an incongruity between behavior and values that is only peculiar to white Western peoples. As I drive in traffic every day in Washington, D.C., I am convinced that human beings everywhere are just one step removed from barbarism. And I am equally impressed by how little the ancient philosophies of the East—Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, African religions—have to do with the individuals and the collective behavior of people who profess them. All of these philosophies and religions preach the sanctity of life, the worth of the individual and the reciprocity of good will while, at the same time, their adherents murder and oppress each other.

I recently read of a college faculty member teaching a course in ethics who was astonished to find that most of his students who got right answers on the test did not believe anything they had been taught. One student said very candidly, "Well, I just want to make

a lot of money, and well, you know, somebody has to lose in the process." Many of the arbitraguers and inside traders on Wall Street with degrees from venerable higher education institutions have exactly the same indifference to the values they were taught. Therefore, it is not the curriculum that is my principal concern, it is the hidden curriculum. It is not what people profess that bothers me, it is what they do. The unwritten values that we transmit to our youth transcend those that we officially espouse, and our youth act on those unwritten values of greed, racism, and bigotry. When the academy makes congruent its operational values with its philosophical values, it will indeed be a transformed institution.

The reason that we focus on the West is obviously due to its several centuries of hegemony over other civilizations and its power to destroy us all. If we are to survive, all of us must have a voice in the debate with our own points of view and our own chosen points of intellectual and social reference. That is what cultural pluralism and excellence are all about.

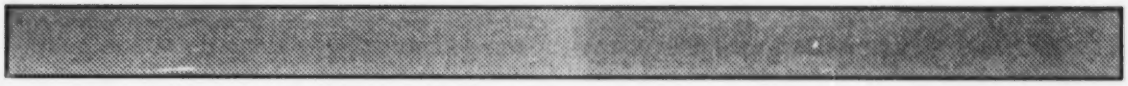
Johnnetta Cole, the illustrious president of Spelman College, has inquired recently if, indeed, society's problems are reflected on our campuses, could it be that learning how to address those problems on our campuses could spin off into our communities. If Dr. Cole's perception is correct, the academy has the ability to play its traditional historic role of leading the nation rather than following as it did during the Civil Rights era. We must not forget that the academy, like all other institutions in American society, was dragged, kicking and protesting, into civil rights compliance by the Congress and the courts. How incredibly progressive and catalytic it would be if institutions of higher learning were now in the forefront of preparing and transforming American society for the 21st century.

Some few institutions and academic leaders are already aware of the agonizing and difficult remaking of institutions and structures that will be required. I will mention only one, although certainly there are others. Seton Hall University is in the midst of confronting this awesome task as it develops its plans for the near and long-term future. I quote from the new mission statement, "Seton Hall University proposes a fundamental transformation of its general education program. The net impact of these changes will be to produce a student community which shares a common educational experience of systematic, active skills development and a common culture which respects and affirms the cultural identities of all of its members, a community of learning in a community of learners." Transcending but encompassing the necessity to improve recruitment and retention, revise the teaching/learning process, and create a hospitable environment, this exciting, comprehensive vision is what is needed to deal with both the realities and the possibilities of the 21st century. It is possible that Seton Hall will not succeed in its ambitious endeavors. That is not important. What is more important is that it dares to envision the necessities of the future. Its reach may exceed its grasp. However, only by reaching can it test the possibilities of success.

The Freshman Year Conferences have, since their inception, focused on the initial critical year of the collegiate experience. However, the implicit focus of these conferences has always been about more than that. One of the most advanced higher education systems in the world was that which existed in Germany between 1933 and 1945. However, it was not the educational competence of that society which caused us concern, but rather its values, its philosophy, and its behavior. We now have the opportunity of answering not only the question of what must we do to make the collegiate experience more successful, but also the more important question: what kinds of people do we want to emerge from that experience.

DISCOVERING, REMEMBERING, LEARNING: WHEN OUR SEPARATE JOURNEYS CONVERGE

by L. Lee Knefelkamp



Keynote Address
The Freshman Year Experience
Small College Conference
Cincinnati, Ohio
November 11, 1989

In her book, *One Writer's Beginnings*, Eudora Welty writes, "As we discover, we remember; remembering ,we discover; and most intensely do we experience this when our separate journeys converge."

In this address, I want to play with those themes of memory, discovery, convergence, intensity, and of separate journeys coming together as I think they do in University 101s all around the country. And so in true liberal arts fashion, I won't refer to the quote again, but I will keep reweaving around the theme. I was privileged to be the academic dean at Macalester College, a place where I grew up, a place that birthed me, and raised me in many ways. I would like to tell you a story about an extrordinary faculty member who was at Macalester, who was, in fact, a teacher of mine when I was an undergraduate, and who, in extraordinary developmental fashion, included me as the designer of her retirement ceremony at Macalester just last year. So if you can imagine a student who sat at her feet then coming to orchestrate and to speak at the retirement dinner, that is the kind of developmental circle that liberal arts colleges can provide in some extraordinary kinds of ways.

Helene Peters had taught at Macalester for 30 years. I was a student at Macalester between 1963 and 1967, the days when there was a foreign language requirement. We no longer have requirements at Macalester College. But in those days we had a four-semester requirement, and I took French. I took French from Helene Peters. In my first semester I got an A. In my second semester I got a B. In my third semester I got a C. And in my fourth semester I got a D. My parents were only grateful that it was not a five-semester requirement.

This is the story about a remarkable teacher and a D student. We were sitting in class and had been translating *The Little Prince*, or I should say the class had been translating *The Little Prince*. I got about as far as the picture, you remember the wonderful picture, where the snake swallows the elephant and it looks like a hat. I liked the pictures in *The Little Prince*. And I was a hurtin' cowboy, a struggling liberal arts student. Helene Peters told this story at her retirement dinner. She said,

> You know, Lee, I remember going into that last semester that you studied with me that you were in the Humanities Room, Humanities 34. You were in the last row sitting second from the left. (This was literally 25 years after the date.) You were sitting second from the left, hiding as you did behind your friend Richie Furrs. You always hid on the days that we were supposed to read out loud. You always hid even more on the days when we were supposed to read out loud what we had translated. I remember your struggling through the class as you had struggled, in fact, going rapidly down hill for a period of four semesters. I always knew you were there because the way you hunched down in your seat marked your presence. It was useless to have you translate *The Little Prince*. And when we finished the unit that day, I began to introduce the second unit that we were studying which was existentialism.

And I remember that and Helene remembers that. She began to talk about Simone De Beauvoir who had been a personal friend of hers. She began to talk about existential theory and philosophy, and then she quoted from Camus, a book that I was only too glad I would not have to translate. She said, "Camus said, maybe we cannot make the world safe for our children, but we should behave as if we could, and we should act accordingly." Helene said, "You sat up; you came out from behind Richie Furrs; you paid attention; your face changed. And at the end of the class, do you remember. . ." and I did remember. "Do you remember," she said, "you rushed up to

me, usually you rushed out the door, but this time you rushed up to me and you said, 'who was that author who said we should act as if we could. Tell me about him, how can I read, what has he written?'" And she engaged me in a conversation about World War II, about her own experience in the resistance and the French underground, about the fact that she had watched me, not just as a student of French, but as a student on the campus, struggle with my own commitment to civil rights and how I would act to actualize that activism. And she began this long conversation with me about existentialism, about responsibility, and about connecting my learning to my life.

She referred me then to the philosophy department, no doubt hoping that I would do better in philosophy than I had done in French. I began a series of courses which turned from independent studies to individual courses into a major and finally into an honors thesis that was done on an existential author that some of you may have read--Nikos Kazantzakis, the author of *Zorba the Greek*, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, and *The Odyssey, A Modern Sequel*. It is not unusual that I would remember that conversation and that day. Such life-changing events leave a mark on us, have a memory on us. In reflecting on them, we learn about ourselves in retrospect, both at the time and in the present. It is not unusual that I would remember that, and I would suspect that all of you sitting here today have such memories in your storehouse of treasures. What is unusual, I think, is that Helene Peters remembered it. She had been a teacher at Macalester College for 30 years. Prior to her retirement dinner, I calculated that she had taught over 10,000 individual students in that 30-year period of time. And yet she was the kind of teacher, she was the kind of connected knower and teacher and learner who remembered the day a D student's face changed. She was the kind of connected learner who powerfully pulled together her past, her experience in the resistance, her love for existential theory, her love for Simon De Beauvoir, and her admiration for Albert Camus, who connected her past and her present as a teacher to the life of an 18-year-old and suggested, in fact, most daringly, most profoundly, but most matter-of-factly, that that material should be connected not only to my present and to my activism, but to my future as well.

Twenty-five years later she remembered that story. I don't think it is really a story about me, although I was privileged to be in it. I think it's a story about liberal arts teaching. But more importantly, I think it is a story about connected teaching and connected learning. In that story are all the themes of what I would like to share with you today.

The first theme is that the curriculum reflects, in effect, the collective autobiography of the faculty who have formed and shaped it. I sometimes think, by the way, that catalogs are wasted on the young. When I look at the catalog of the University of South Carolina or of Hamline University, which is a rival of Macalester, or some other schools that I know, but not intimately or well, I can see the curriculum and I can imagine the faces of the people who shaped it. But when I look at the catalog of Macalester College and see oral intepretation, I see behind it in the theatre department the face of Mary Gwen Owen who was my father's advisor, who was my sister's advisor, and who was my advisor until she and the other members of the theatre department invited me to think of another major. It was not, they said, that the strain of being a theatre major was so hard on me that it made me throw up before acting class. It was rather the fact that they threw up afterwards.

I cannot to this day see *The Little Prince* in the book store and not remember Helene Peters. I cannot to this day see the course, "Modern 'Isms" in the political science department and not recall that it was created by G. Theodore Mitau , who was the first Jew ever hired at Macalester College and who created a course on the modern 'isms so that he could educate American students about fascism and Nazism

and the difference between those political philosophies and democracy. I think that all of you can think of those memories of the curriculums on your campuses and places that you have been. It is important to my theme today that we remember, at least for 30 minutes or so, that the curriculum can be conceptualized as the collective autobiography of the people who have shaped it, the people who have taught it, and the people who have taken it, because it is, in effect, our historical life blood that connects our past with our present, and hopefully connects us to a better future. So the theme of connection is powerful for me because what she did in her advising was share a bit of her life with me as a resistance fighter, as a person who taught school in the Pyrennes Mountains when she had to go underground because being in the resistance was still too dangerous for her. She connected her experience to the civil rights struggle, a social theme to which I could relate in the mid-'60s.

The second thing that I think this story illustrates is the effortlessness with which she presumed that the curriculum and life were, in fact, one and the same, what we have come to call at Macalester College the "seamless" curriculum. She presumed that I should be about the business of connecting my intellectual development with my social activism in the same clear way that, in her generation and in her time and in her youth, she had connected her social activism to her ultimate intellectual development.

I think the story also illustrates a marvelous opportunity that we have and that even at liberal arts colleges we take too little advantage of. She considered the fact that the educational experience was not confined by the classroom. She let me trail along with her as we walked down the halls and into her office. She engaged me; she engaged me in an academic conversation. She became a colleague, a senior colleague, a more expert colleague, a colleague that terrified me and, by the way, terrifies me to this day. She became someone that I looked up to. She could engage me as an individual in an academic conversation about ideas, about transformation, about effects that those ideas could have on my life. In addition, it seems to me that by engaging me in a conversation she implied another theme of this speech: that we must always be about expanding the collective autobiography to be more inclusive of the stories and histories of the people that take and have taught the curriculum. She didn't just tell me about her work in the resistance. She asked me to consider how I would work in the American resistance, in effect, in the civil rights movement. And she also said, by the way that she treated me, that the educational experience was one of a connection beyond the classroom, beyond the books, beyond the hallway, beyond the advising office; that it was fundamentally, perhaps most intimately, perhaps first and last, about having a conversation with myself, about what ideas were meaningful, to what ideas I would commit myself, and to what the meaning of education would be.

She presumed that liberal arts education was about the total curriculum, that liberal arts curriculum was a means of remembering, of holding precious the autobiographies of the people and experiences and ideas which shaped it. She also presumed that it was a means of discovery, as Welty would have us consider— discovery of new contacts, new meaning making, and new individual difference biographies, adding these discoveries to the curriculum as we taught it. Her presumption was that the total curriculum was always about remembering, always about the significance of a heritage, always about the significance of personal as well as collective history, and always, at the same time, about discovering, admitting, adding, and expanding the new.

She was an amazing individual. And she referred me that day to David White in the

philosophy department and to Ray Livingston in the comparative literature department. I did, in fact, do better for them than I had done for her. I must digress just a second to tell you that in the first week that I was dean at Macalester College, we went to lunch together. She is a very short, wonderful, moxie lady, and she took me aside after lunch and held my hand tightly in her small hand and looked me straight in the eye, (and I tell you she terrifies me to this day), and she said, "Lee, you have the affection of the senior faculty who remember you and forgive you. You also have the *vita* and the pedigree of the younger faculty. Don't screw it up!"

She referred me to Ray Livingston who, two years later, wrote a final exam as we can do in small colleges—just for me, (although good teaching makes it feel like it's written just for you, no matter how many people are in your class). When I walked into the lecture hall, sat down by myself, opened a manila envelope, and pulled out the page, typed on the manila envelope were three questions. The first one was, "What have you heard? " The second one was, "What have you seen?" And the third one was, "And what will you do now?" This speech is the latest revision of my answers to that exam.

Certainly I believe that Ray, just as Helene, thought that liberal arts education had a great deal to do with what I had heard. I know that he wanted me to have attended class. I know that he wanted me to have attended the lecture series on our campus. But, more importantly, I believe that he believed that a liberal arts education, that an American education, in effect, ought to command more of me, that I should have been listening to more people than just the faculty and the guest lecturers. I should have been listening to my peers, to myself, to the commentaries, to the world around me. I should have somehow found a way to make seamless what I heard in class and what I experienced in the world outside the classroom, because, in fact, they had everything to say to each other. Certainly Ray Livingston wanted me to have read my assignments. We had many conversations about that very issue. He wanted me to have read and cherished the words on the printed page as those of us in academe love and cherish the printed page, but he wanted me to have seen more broadly and more wisely. He wanted me to have a sense of the social issues of my day, to have seen people who were different from myself, to have confronted the puzzlement of those differences, to have worked through from a fear to a recognition to a celebration of individual differences and diversity. And he expected somehow that I would make that seamless and connected.

The first two questions, although hard to respond to in that particular environment, were not surprises to me. They sounded like the things Helene Peters and Ray Livingston had been up to all those years, a typical kind of Macalester way of pushing you into thinking, or inviting you into thinking. The third question was the hard one. Livingston expected somehow that I would take responsibility for my learning. He expected that what I had seen and what I had heard in some integrated kind of way demanded of me that I accept the responsibilities of an education, that I somehow find a way of acting on that knowledge in the world, that it wasn't over when it was over, that it was just beginning. And I have to tell you, as much as I thought I had caught on to the educational game, it wasn't until that moment that I realized that education was ultimately about commitment in the face of doubt, in the face of uncertainty, and in the face of the unknown.

Therefore, how could it not be that several years later, after I had returned from the Peace Corps and went to graduate school that I discovered the work of Bill Perry to be so resonant with my experience in graduate school. In fact, when I first read Bill's work, I thought that he and Madame Peters and Ray Livingston had been in collusion all the time. Our students are asking us those same of kind of connected questions. They are coming to

our classrooms and to our advising offices asking us if there is anything in there, if there is anything about what we teach, about the ethos of our campus environments that is true, on which they can stake themselves, their lives, and their souls. Clearly I think our students are also asking us—not just because of the power and the press of the economy and the career kinds of issues they are facing, but truly out of a sense of the ethics and the efficacy of our own lives—if there is anything in the curriculum or the campus climate, or the ethos that we are teaching that is useful, that they can take with them in a seamless way out of the halls and off the campus and across the street and into their lives.

Thirdly, and very powerfully these days, I believe our students are asking us if there is anything about the way we teach or what we teach or how we run our institutions or how we treat our faculty or how we treat students that will help them learn what is ethical and help them learn how to live and stand on commitments.

And fourthly, I think they're asking if there is any way that we can convince them that we see them, hear them, recognize them, and mirror them in the curriculum. These are fundamental and profound questions of connection. They are asking us to what are we connected, and, most powerfully, they are asking us whether we are connected to them. I think our responses to those questions have everything to do with the heart of what is happening on liberal arts campuses today. Students want to know what is true and useful and ethical, and whether or not they are seen and heard and understood in their own voice. And finally they are asking us to return to our campuses with a renewed commitment to expand the autobiography that is reflected in the curriculum by taking diversity seriously.

You know, I almost hate the word diversity. I have to tell you, it's the "D" word now. Diversity, that was once an alluring intellectual image, is harder to live by. It is easier to integrate the residence halls than it is to live in them. It is easier to talk about diversity in the curriculum than it is to confront material you haven't taught before. And it scares us as much as it scares the students. It is easy to talk about the fact that if we really take diversity seriously, we may change some of the structures of higher education to make them more accessible or perhaps more humane, perhaps better. But then we begin to worry about what would that mean for us and our place in the hierarchy.

Last year at Macalester I occupied the dean's office. I had occupied that same office as a student. When I was a student I wanted that dean to take me seriously. When I was a dean, I realized that it scared me a bit to take the new students seriously. So, when students are asking us to expand the autobiography of our curriculum, I think they are fundamentally asking us about whether or not the content in that curriculum not only mirrors them, but connects with them also. If we can enter that venture of curriculum expansion together, we can change the face of our campuses for the good.

The Association of American Colleges has just finished two major studies, (well actually they are in the middle of the second one). The first is on the assessment of the undergraduate major, and the second is investigating the nature of the undergraduate majors themselves. What they have found so far are two very startling things. The first is that in the senior year, there is a profound, uniform lack of ability of seniors to connect their intellectual experience in terms of connecting one course to another, the major to the general education experience, and the curriculum to life. The second thing the Association is finding in this study is that even in the areas of science and math, where we presume a certain kind of logical curricular hierarchy, we have what they call "horizontal" curriculums, that is curriculums of perhaps the first two years spread out over the four. The researchers are discovering, in fact, that students are not being

given the kind of enriched, enlivened, and extraordinary experiences that they are capable of receiving. We have to find a way, individually and collectively, to expand the sense of connections that our students have to the major, to the conversations they have of the intellectual perspectives of the major. We must find a way to help them expand their sense of themselves in the context of general education and experiential learning so that they can use experiential and classroom learning as the paired, integrated aspects of the whole that they really are. I think it is fascinating that at the same time major national studies are finding that our students lack a sense of connection, other major national studies are finding that these students are asking for an increased sense of connection. It is time for us to consider demanding more, expecting more, and connecting more on our own parts.

Another thing that I think our students would like us to think about is how we can find a way to help them expand their sense of deliberate and profound connection between themselves and a lifelong experience of activism. Certainly Ray Livingston expected me to do that. Or if I failed to do that, he expected me at least to know that that was his expectation. And when I talk about activism, I am not talking about being on a soap box if that's not the student's thing. I am not talking necessarily about changing every structure of American society, although I could name a few that I would like to see changed. I am talking about students finding a way to integrate an active, passionate, intellectual activism into their own lives so that they are alert to issues, if issues are their orientation; so they can develop an appreciation of poetry, if poetry gives their mind pleasure and ease; so that they can experience and develop and demand a sense of self-reflection as they move as citizens through the society.

It is time for us to find ways to connect the content and the process of our curriculum more deeply and more strongly to a lifelong sense of active presence in our students' own lives. As an illustration of what happens when we don't do that, just two weeks ago at Wellesley, a liberal arts college of some note, two students were charged with spray painting anti-Semitic and racist graffiti all over the campus. They were caught, and they confessed. The students said that they didn't mean any harm by it and that they were sorry for damaging property, but neither of the students commented in any meaningful way about the damage they did to the people they assaulted by the racist and anti-Semitic graffiti. "I do not hate or dislike Jews, blacks, Chinese, or any other religious or ethnic group," said one student. "As for why and how it happened, I really don't know, except that I had been drinking; and things just, you know, got out of control. I am unaware of the implications that you tell me of the swastikas or the racist slogans that were scrawled on the walls. I didn't realize," he went on to say, "that any of them would be considered specifically offensive to any particular group. I had not been educated in school about the use of these signs and these symbols." The two lawyers for these young men who had done this on the Wellesley campus and on nine other liberal arts college campuses throughout the Boston area are using as a defense the fact that their clients had not been educated about the use of these symbols, these historical realities, these present realities, in terms of the meaning of those symbols.

Whether or not you believe that defense, it is being used. It would not be used as a defense if the lawyers did not think it would work. One of the things that I would like you to think about is how we can reintegrate the precious commodity of the kind of content that these students are saying they did not receive. Can we find a way to connect it, in the way Helene Peters connected her activities in the resistance to Camus for today's generation of students? And can we do that without becoming people who make tests of liberal arts education, with lists and categories that are as exclusive as they are inclusive?

I think the incident at Wellesley and others like it around the country demand that we ask ourselves, "How do we connect the curriculum to real people's lives, to real historic events, to real students' lives in the present?" What, I wonder, on your campus and mine are the students making of the falling of the Berlin Wall? And how can we help them understand that it has something to do with what Robert Frost wrote about when he was writing about the walls between farmers in New England?

I think that students would ask of us, as people who care about higher education, that we would look for those theories and use those theories of ourselves and of our students that have always been built on the basic fundamental and ethical assumption of connection to the students. I think one of the reasons why the Perry model was so alluring to me in my youth and so comforting to me in my middle-age, is that it was clear to me that he had spent time in the presence of students. I could hear their voices. Those of us who have worked on the model in the last 20 years since it was put out for us to enjoy, to delight in, critique, expand, and play with, also know that he has helped us expand into voices that he had not heard in the original studies. We have expanded the Perry model to include more women, (although women were in the original study), more people of color, and more non-traditional learners, all the kinds of ways a theory grows and expands.

The Perry model is a connected model in three significant ways. First, it connects intellectual and ethical developments, a lesson I think we must return to, particularily in light of the Wellesley example. Second, it connects intellectual development with self development. And third, it connects a theory about teaching and learning to teachers and to learners. We must use and find and create and make those kinds of theories about students at community colleges and liberal arts colleges and large state universities who are old and young, who are of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. Those are the kinds of models that we must accept, and I believe that we must not accept any other kinds of models unless they meet that sense of connectedness.

I have an enduring image of Bill Perry that I don't think I have related in public before. But it is absolutely true to the model. And since I think theory is autobiography, I shall tell this story about Bill. He and his wife Mary were at a place they call "down river." It is, for lack of a better description, an extraordinarily interesting house in the middle of the marshes somewhere in Massachusetts. I was to meet them there, and I didn't know the way. So Bill gave me directions. Bill gave me a map. Bill gave me a schema. I left Boston and wended my way around highways that I had never been on only to find myself at the end of his directions, standing alone on a dock at the edge of the bay. If that isn't the metaphor for intellectual development in liberal arts colleges, I don't know what is. No phone, a rental car, a storm coming up, existential loneliness, and Camus was no help. I looked out, and coming through the marshes was a sailboat. And in the sailboat was Bill Perry, coming to rescue a young faculty member from a certain terrifying existential loneliness in the face of all of the elements. I climbed happily into the boat, and for a while things went smoothly as we wedded our way through the marshland. But then we hit the open water, and the wind came up. The boat began to toss and turn in the face of the wind. As the winds increased, the waves increased, and as the waves increased, the water splashed all over me. We finally made it to the dock at the other end and came inside to Mary's warm and loving embrace. I changed into dry clothes, and she warmed me with her intellect, her kindness, and her love, and then chuckled a bit. It turns out that Bill had been heading into the waves on purpose for the entire trip. An intellectual development feels like that to me: just when you think you are rescued, the faculty member does something like head you into the waves and leaves you in the face of the elements, always, to be prepared for the unexpected.

As an academic administrator at a large state and middle-sized university, I found, much to my dismay, that one of the ways to attract award-winning faculty from a university to my university was to offer them a reduced teaching load. I think it is time for us to rethink the entire environment and reward structure in higher education in regard to what we are rewarding and what we are saying about those faculty who spend time in teaching and time in advising. Now one of the biggest bargaining commodities to attract faculty from one institution to another is to reduce their connection with students.

I leave you two challenges as you work to make the transitions of the freshman year meaningful to your students. Please find a way in your curriculum, in your design, in your expansion of the collective autobiography to help students find the connections that I am talking about to the rest of the curriculum, to the major, to the liberal arts experience, to themselves, to you, to each other, and to the very differences they find fearful, terrifying, but ultimately they could celebrate. And I would ask that you consider focusing your considerable energy and your considerable expertise, the energy and the expertise that has brought you to a deepening understanding of the first-year student experience, on understanding the senior experience and what we can do to make it more congruent, so that the entire college experience is not only one of increased complexity, but also one of increased integration, increased empathy, and an increased sense of connection between the students, faculty, and staff.

I would like to leave you with an image of connectedness that has been moving to many of you as it has been moving to me. Maya Lin, who is the brilliant architect who designed the Vietnam War Memorial and who persevered, by the way, through extraordinary racist reactions to the fact that she won that competition as an Asian-American woman in designing the memorial, was also asked to design the Civil Rights Memorial which has just opened in Montgomery, Alabama. This remarkable young scholar, although she calls herself an architect, found a way to connect a nation. She gives us a certain kind of message that may be worth our thinking about. As you walk by the Vietnam Memorial wall, you see the names of the people who died, and the names of the people who are missing; and you see them in the context of your own reflection. As you stand there, you can see the names, you can touch the names, you can touch the history. You can imagine the autobiography—Latin names, names that you can pronounce, names that you cannot, names that reflect men and women, people of different ethnicity, religion, race, socioeconomic class, and, certainly after the experience of the war, people with different abilities and disabilities. But you stand there, a living continuity to who they were and to who they have been. Behind you are the trees that aren't you and aren't them, but are growing. It is an amazing ability that Maya Lin had to bring together a sort of a healing and a sense of connectedness and a sense of the past and the present and the future, a sense of touch, if you will, to that moment in time and to those people that are memorialized on the wall.

The Civil Rights Memorial that she has just completed has a list of 40 names engraved in a round disk. The motif in that disk is water that comes up and flows down and around and over the names depicting the quote that Martin Luther King used so dramatically from the Hebrew Bible of letting the waters of righteousness flow down around you. Those 40 names are men and women, Chicanos and whites and blacks, the old and the young, students and faculty, lawyers and housewives, all of whom came together over an extraordinary period of time between 1955 and 1968. It begins with the death in 1955 of a man who led a voter registration drive, and it ends with the death of Martin Luther King. And people who go there now can touch the names. They can put their hands in the water. They can connect to a time in American history from which we need to learn much. They can

connect to a time in which people were connected between their knowledge and their vision, between the past and the future.

Each of those places is hallowed ground, not because it has been blessed by a rabbi or a priest or a minister. It is hallowed ground because it is hard-won ground. It is hallowed ground because it is ground forged of diversities. It is hallowed ground because those diverse groups tried to forge a community even in the face of their differences, and it is hallowed ground because it represents the best essential gesture, the best moral gesture of the individuals at the time. I think that the liberal arts curriculum must be no less. Students must be able to touch it. They must be able to be connected to it. They must be able to see that they are connected to the histories and the autobiographies of people they will never know. And most importantly, they must be able to inscribe themselves, this time not on a memorial to the dead, but on a memorial to the living.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

By Peter Scott

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The First-Year Experience, I am almost tempted to say, is the higher education experience. Not only is the former the gateway to the latter, and the appearance of this gateway has a decisive influence on how many people actually want to pass through it. But the first year is also a substantial part of the total experience, perhaps a quarter or even a third in the British system. This makes the first-year experience a very significant element in the total higher education experience, rather than a detached preliminary. But the two do need to be distinguished because the first-year experience is the student's first encounter with higher education. As such it has elements of novelty, strangeness, excitement, and difficulty which the experience of the second and subsequent years can never match. They can never quite rival the intensity of the first encounter with higher education. So the first-year experience is a critical intersection, a meeting place between student expectations on the one hand and academic experiences on the other.

This address is divided into four main sections. First, I would like to address the changing context of first-year studies; the impact of expansion and demographic change, the growth in the number of nontraditional students and nontraditional courses, the changes in the popularity of different subjects and different courses of study, and the very important social and cultural shifts which affect higher education. Second, I would like to discuss in more detail the academic issues that arise from this changing context, particularly the issues of standards and quality which are of great importance here in Britain and also in the United States, the content of subjects which is obviously changing all the time under the impact of new knowledge and new approaches to teaching and learning. Third, I would like to say something about non-academic issues, the kind of social, pastoral implications of the first-year experience. And finally I will end by saying how these changes in our perceptions and approaches to the first-year experience may be connected to our broader view of higher education and its place in our society, in our economy, and our culture as well. All this I will try to do in an international perspective. Inevitably I will speak very much from a British experience, qualified to some degree by a California experience which, I am the first to admit, may not be a typical American experience.

Let me start with the impact of expansion and demography on the first-year experience. The relationship between the expansion of higher education and the pattern of demographic changes is a very complex one. Generally, in the last half century, one could say that demography has intensified expansion. First, the artificial demographic boom, created by returning servicemen after the war, jolted the rather staid, prewar systems of higher education in many countries out of a genteel complacency. Then with the postwar baby boom, the children of those returning servicemen crashed into higher education in the 1960s when higher education was already undergoing rapid change for cultural and intellectual reasons. That had radical, and perhaps still to be calculated, consequences. Most recently during the 1980s, demographic buoyancy has kept higher education afloat in a rather difficult time. This latest episode has had a great effect on the fortunes of higher education, certainly here in Britain. It could be said that here in the United Kingdom, it has produced what I would call the tilt towards the polytechnics and away from universities. I would further suggest that in most developed countries this demographic buoyancy during the 1980s has produced significant shifts in subject preferences.

Now we seem to be facing a very different prospect; at any rate, we feel that we are facing a demographic bust. I say "feel" because it is becoming less and less certain that higher education will, in fact, decline in its aggregate size, certainly not in a country

like Britain where we have a very underdeveloped system of higher education, but also in the United States. Certainly in Britain two earlier demographic troughs were successfully over- come without any noticeable slackening in the pace of expansion. The 1950s and perhaps late 1970s were in retrospect rather quiet periods in postwar growth of higher education. But, of course, the demographic trough of the 1990s will hit much more mature systems of higher education which enroll much larger numbers. Nevertheless, they are perhaps more likely to be affected significantly by demographic decline than the much smaller and much more elitist systems with which we were familiar in the 1950s and 1960s.

Demographic decline in the 1990s will not lead to an aggregate decline in the total size and scale of higher education as an enterprise. Nor is it even likely to trigger a series of catastrophic events such as the failure of whole institutions, although obviously it will create the opportunities maybe for rationalization and amalgamation of smaller institutions. But it will shape decisively the character of the system in its details because of its differential impact on different levels of institutions and on different subjects. I have no doubt that this coming demographic decline will not have the same effect as early troughs. It will not quiet down higher education, somehow dampening the pressures for change. Rather, I believe, it will have the opposite effect, quickening the pace of change. This is the decisive change route. In the past it was rapid expansion fueled by demographic pulses which somehow set off the successive revolutions in higher education in the mid and late 19th century, in the years after 1945, and again in the 1960s. Now higher education, in a sense, is so pervasive and so entrenched in modern societies, its elaborate systems have become the status quo, almost conservative forces.

So long as there is an increasing supply of conventional students, there is very little incentive to change. Higher education, in a sense, has become so powerful that it is often the students, not the system, that have to adapt and change. For this reason, I think a demographic decline, which shakes the self-confidence of higher education systems, may lead to healthy change or a beneficial reassessment of old roles.

The basic conclusion for all systems at their different levels of development can be summed up in a very simple phrase: things cannot go on as they are. The British system will move rapidly from being a restrictive elite system or a semi-elite system to becoming a mass system. The American system will move in those states where it has already moved in this direction from being a mass system to something close to being a universal system. Not all institutions will be affected in the same way within these systems. These elite institutions in all countries will certainly be able to maintain their distinctiveness. Indeed, I think they may be able to enhance their distinctiveness in important ways. Within an ever more diverse and dispersed system of higher education, their elitism will become less significant and perhaps less objectionable and less open to political attack.

To take the example of Britain, with which I am most familiar, the effect of the coming shortage of qualified high school leavers will be to make already a significant number of degree programs open access, or close to open access. The most obvious example, sadly, is this country's manifold branches of engineering. Even today there are barely enough candidates to fill the places which are offered by institutions. We are almost at the peak of a demographic tide. When that tide ebbs away, as we know it will with institutions, we will be faced with a whole series of uncomfortable choices: close the courses, or at any rate, drastically cut the number of places they offer in them; lower entry standards, although that's unlikely to be enough to beat the problem; or redesign those courses to attract a wider clientele. These are not easy tasks in a field like engineering, which necessarily

demands fairly high standards of numeracy and scientific knowledge at the start. This example, I believe, demonstrates a pattern of response which will become much clearer in the 1990s.

In a sense, it is the elite systems of higher education, as in Britain, which will find it most difficult to meet the challenge of demographic decline and changing patterns of demand, despite the fact that in theory they have much more room to maneuver than those systems which already enroll a very high proportion of the population. It is not simply a question of dipping a little deeper into the existing pool of talent. I suspect America will cope much better than Britain with demographic decline, and the British polytechnics and colleges, for instance, will cope better than the British universities. And why do I say this when it seems to run against common sense? Surely demographic decline will hit first and hardest at those more expanded systems and also within the less elite institutions.

I would offer two reasons for believing that this might not be the case. First, the mass systems in the open institutions have much more experience of flexibility and adaptation than the restricted systems and the closed institutions. Second, the elitist institutions here are generally part of a much wider web of educational exclusion. Potential students, the kind who win through in a system like the American, are progressively weeded out in a system like the British well before they get to the threshold of higher education. Hence there is the phenomenon I described a moment ago: barely sufficient candidates to study important subjects like engineering within a system that recruits barely 14% of the age group. So because of these filters and constraints, elite systems may find it difficult to generate extra student demand, even if they experience the kind of "Road to Damascus" conversion and drop some of their existing attitudes to quality and standards.

The shape of higher education in the 1990s in all developed countries is now fairly plain. There will be many nontraditional students, whether traditional is defined in terms of current American or current British practice. Indeed there will be so many nontraditional students that in many institutions they will become, and have become, the overwhelming majority. There will also be many more nontraditional courses and study programs. It will become much more difficult to place our present emphasis on undergraduate and postgraduate courses. It will become harder to discern what is an undergraduate course and what is another kind of program. Flexible programs of study will mean that what one student actually experiences as an undergraduate course may be to another, sitting perhaps alongside him/her in the classroom or the lecture hall, a continuing education program. So systems of higher education and institutions will have to broaden their student and curricular base in this way to stay in business or rather to stay in the right kind of business, meeting the complex and evolving personal, socioeconomic, and cultural demands in modern society.

These changes, I suggest, will tend paradoxically to weaken the present clear and sharp focus on the first year. The very phrase after all suggests that there will be subsequent years of study. Can we make such an assumption about the new students which may flood our systems of higher education during the remaining years of this century? Certainly not, if it is assumed that they are determined to embark on continuous, sustained, and connected study. Categories which today still seem fairly firm and reliable, certainly in the United Kingdom—like the distinction of being full-time students and part-time students, between advanced and less advanced courses of study, between initial higher education and continuing education—these kinds of categories will probably become fuzzier as the years proceed. So perhaps will be the present clear focus on the first year as a discernable stage of higher education. In the future, we may need

to employ a rather looser term--initiation, induction, or something similar--though unfortunately that has an even narrower focus as well. Perhaps we need a new word.

Of course, the forces of expansion and maybe contraction, which are driven by demography, are not the only forces with which higher education and first-year entrants to higher education are going to have to contend in the 1990s. Another powerful influence will be what happens in the secondary or high schools. In many countries important changes and debates about high schools and secondary education are underway. In Britain, for instance, we are soon to have for the very first time a national curriculum supported by a whole battery of tests which school children will go through. Good news for higher education, some people may say. It may raise standards. Well, maybe. After all, in a sense, the hidden curriculum in British schools today, the one which is being superseded by this new explicit national curriculum, is one that is heavily influenced by higher education's needs. Basically, it is determined by higher education entrance requirements.

The national curriculum, which is going to be introduced, will not be written with higher education's needs so much in mind; it will be a curriculum for the whole people, not the privileged section going on to college even if that section is increasing all the time. This is something of a landmark in British education certainly, the uncoupling of the secondary school curriculum from the requirements of higher education. Now something similar is happening in Britain also in relation to the examinations that students take in secondary schools. For the moment, the examination of great interest to higher education in Britain, the advanced level, has been preserved. But it has been robbed of its foundation and running mate in a way, the ordinary level examination, which comes two years before it in the British system. This is being replaced by a much broader, wider examination, the GCSE, which is founded on very, very different principles. It is more school based. It doesn't look forward to college so much. It is much more project-based so it pays less attention to traditional disciplinary divisions. It is more concerned with skills than with knowledge. So arguably this new examination, which is going to shape British higher education eventually in the 1990s, is much less plugged into the needs of higher education institutions.

There are other curriculum developments and examinations which tend in the same direction which I won't describe to you because they become rather detailed. My point is really quite a simple one. In Britain, at any rate, first-year students will arrive in higher education having had radically different experiences in high school. What is happening in high school, of course, is by no means consistent even within nations and certainly not between them. Radical and reactionary policies sometimes are mixed up in unusual, even bizarre, combinations. The back-to-basics movement, which is particularly prominent in the United States and particularly favored by your Education Secretary Mr. Bennett, is a good example. It can take a comparatively benign form of the emphasis on cultural literacy placed by people like E.D. Hirsch. It can take a rather more virulent form like Secretary Bennett's polemics or Allan Bloom's recent book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, an attack against modern styles in education in a very general form, both secondary and higher.

The effect of these movements in school and in the general educational world and on higher education particularly is necessarily ambiguous. The uncoupling of the school curriculum from college needs in Britain, which I have described, may place uncomfortable demands on higher education in the short run. But in the long run, it may help to free British higher education from the web of restrictive elitism I tried to describe earlier which surely, if left in place, will cramp its development in the 1990s. Similarly, the back-to-basics movement is a strong force in Britain too and was one of the motives behind the establishment of a national

curriculum. In the short run, it may raise the standards of freshmen and so take a load off the minds of their harassed teachers who have begun to wonder what, if any, prior knowledge they can assume students possess. Again in the long run, too great a swing back to traditional values, too great an emphasis on cultural literacy, which inevitably is a narrowing idea, may have the unintended effect of throwing up cultural barriers against new kinds of students who, by definition, will not come predominately from mainstream groups or categories in society.

Another influence, of course, is the character of these students, indeed of all students that higher education is likely to enroll in the remaining years of this century. We clearly need to consider the characteristics of these young and not-so-young people other than those that they acquire through formal schooling. We need to examine the cultures out of which they have come and the ambitions that they have. There can be no doubt that students in the 1980s have already far more utilitarian ambitions than their predecessors in the 1960s and 1970s. This is reflected in subject choices. But what about the students of the 1990s? It can be argued that a kind of social altruism may stage a modest recovery. After all, older students with part of their professional lives already behind them, may lack the kind of fierce and rather focused ambitions of those who are just starting out on their careers. After all, many of them will have turned to higher education almost as a relief from the pressures of their professions and of their work. It is an opportunity perhaps to step out of their careers and reassess what they are going to do with their lives.

In any case, it could be argued that as higher education becomes less distinctive, as in Hirsch's terms, it confers fewer and fewer positional advantages on people. The choice of subject will require greater weight. It will, and already is, no longer enough to be just a graduate in most developed societies. That really confers quite a marginal advantage over other people. Certainly what kind of graduate will become more and more important in keeping up in the professional race. If this account is accurate, freshmen of the 1990s are likely to have even more utilitarian expectations than those of the 1980s.

Before leaving this topic, I would like to address the topic of cultural perspective which I believe is very important. We need to consider the values of society, the kinds of cultural influences which are shaping tomorrow's freshmen. It is unrealistic to imagine that the first-year experience is largely an academic experience, or even an experience that is guided predominately and contained within higher education. For better or worse, most of the influences that shape the experience come from outside the academy altogether. Some of them have been there for always: the painful transition from being an adolescent to being an adult, all the middle age "coming to terms with crumbling ambition" or some other kind of phrases which will exist in all societies. But other influences are rather instantaneous and ephemeral: the influences of "pop" style, fashion, the mass media in their wider sense. All these influences are very important, and higher education has lost whatever monastic sense it ever had. It is no longer in retreat from the world. Instead, it is entirely of the world. It cannot shield its students or contain their experiences within a clearly programmed framework anymore. It has to live with pluralism, diversity—even, at times, disorder and anarchy. So it seems to me that the first-year experience has become and will become an increasingly volatile experience.

Let me now focus more closely on the particular academic issues raised by the changing context in which the first-year experience has to be placed. Such issues fall into three categories. First is the adequacy of preparation for higher education among incoming students and their familiarity with requisite study skills. Second are, changes in the content of subjects under the impact of the noble demands made by new kinds of students,

changes in how subjects must be taught and the conditions likely to prevail in the 1990s. (In other words, how do we rework the balance between the how and what of higher education, between the competing demands and threats of specialization?) Third, what does all this mean in terms of both the standards that can be achieved by individual students and the quality that can be maintained and must be maintained by institutions in entire systems?

Let me start with preparation and study skills. Here we encounter a series of radical phenomena that will be felt most immediately and most fiercely in the first year, but the influence of which will pervade the entire experience of higher education. The first I have already alluded to, the uncoupling of secondary and higher education. This process has gone much further in the United States than in Europe but is in an advanced stage in Europe as well. Britain in that sense will experience the kind of strains, the centrifugal forces felt by American colleges and universities in the 1960s and the 1970s. Only in Britain we have felt them in the 1980s.

This uncoupling, I think, has two aspects. The first is that some subjects just don't seem to get taught in secondary schools anymore. At any rate, they don't seem to get taught adequately. So often higher education has to start from scratch or at least all over again. This is not necessarily a bad thing. In the past and the present, many British students particularly have suffered because they failed to adapt patterns of study learned too well in secondary school to the very different conditions of higher education. So perhaps no study skills at all are better than study skills that are too rigid and inflexible. It is often said that American students start out worse but end up better than British students, although in both countries, art students exhibit greater intellectual imagination than their science colleagues. I think this has something to do with the rigidity of their preparation. Perhaps the reason is their less exact preparation, their rather loose study skills which can be an advantage in the right context. It may leave them more room to develop. But it may be that as more and more students arrive in college in an unprepared or underprepared state, there will be as many gains as losses if these things are handled correctly.

The second aspect of the uncoupling of school from colleges is perhaps more serious. This is that the goals of the two sets of institutions have diverged more and more. Paradoxically, when comparatively few 18-year-olds went on to college, secondary schools seemed to share the aspirations of higher education. Today when very many 18-year-olds go to college, secondary schools seem to have repudiated many of the traditional goals of a college education. The more they have come to be seen merely as preparatory to higher education, the more they have insisted on their own separate ambitions. So a number of tensions have developed. A generation ago, high schools resented the continuing academicism of higher education and tried to offer a more down to earth, a more practical education. Now, of course, they place greater emphasis on general, transferable, interpersonal skills while higher education has become an increasingly utilitarian enterprise at many levels, often sacrificing breadth to expertise; and this, of course, is reflected in student choices.

Another phenomenon which is of great importance in relation to our expectations about student preparation and study skills is simply the erosion of the literary habits and forms, which in the past 300 years or more in Europe and the United States we have associated instinctively with the highest levels of civilization. Because of the growing importance of information technology in all its widest forms—the multi-channel television, computers, the video, and so on—we are witnessing a rapid reversion to an oral and visual culture. These are consequences far beyond things like students not being able to spell very well or even having never heard of Jane Austen or

Shakespeare or perhaps Abraham Lincoln. Our deepest perceptions of ourselves and of our world, the relationship between reflection and action, of fear in practice, of reason and instinct are derived from those literary habits and forms which are rapidly being undermined by the new electronic media. In the end, a more radical and far reaching response will be required of higher education than simply providing every freshman with a minicomputer. The new skills often supplant as often as they complement the old skills, and I think we need to take that kind of issue on board more than perhaps we have at present.

This leads, I believe, to the second category of academic issues, those that have to do with the content of subjects and the way in which they should be taught. The issues in play here have been frequently, even remorselessly rehearsed over the years: breadth versus specialization, liberal culture or expert skills, problem solving or critical capacities, qualities that can be adapted or transferred as opposed to an academic canon, and so on. My guess is that these tensions, which are felt most acutely and decisively in the first year of higher education, naturally will grow worse rather than better.

There is a lot more talking and arguing to come regarding these issues. Why do I believe this? Let me just suggest a couple of reasons. First, the advance of technology makes contradictory demands on higher education. We need more and more expertise to survive both professionally and perhaps even personally in our lives. But that expertise becomes obsolescent at an ever-increasing pace. So we need to be generalists too. This demand for both more effective preparation and expert skills and for better general education places great strain on higher education and particularly on those responsible for its first stages. Should expertise be developed later, in the second or subsequent years in higher education? Or should it be the other way around, with courses culminating somehow in generalization and perhaps therefore in civilization? Or must the two, the expert and the general, always be developed side by side?

My second reason is simply that there are very powerful voices like Allan Bloom's that argue that higher education has sold its soul and succumbed to a kind of amoral relativism. They further argue that amoral relativism is all that students are prepared to stomach. Their cry is for a kind of reassertion of cultural integrity and disciplinary orthodoxy. Yet higher education faces the prospect of an even more centrifugal future than it has in the past. In the circumstances in which all systems will inevitably find themselves in the next decade, concepts like integrity and orthodoxy will become, if not downright impossible, at any rate highly problemmatic. In this coming clash between idealism and realism, sentimentality and progress—whatever other dichotomy you would like to choose to describe it—a key battleground inevitably will be the first or the freshman year.

The third category of academic issues concerns quality and standards. The issues here are far more subtle than the simple-minded conviction that because students are likely to be less able or less well prepared as higher education enrolls a higher and higher proportion of the age cohort, the first year must be made less and less rigorous. Even if this were inevitable, it would not follow that the standards of entire degree programs would have to be lowered. Certainly in Britain there would be great reluctance to contemplate such an outcome. Some people in Britain would argue that we must provide more preparatory or access courses which bring underprepared students up to the level at which they are able to undertake a conventional degree program. As such courses can be targeted very successfully toward underprivileged groups, they were especially popular with those who place great emphasis on equity in the provision of higher education. Others again, of course, argue that degree programs simply need to be lengthened if access is to become less discriminatory. This is, incidentally, what helps with

the increasing competition between expert and general skills which I just described. But both these policies are expensive, so I think they are very unlikely to appeal to politicians. Others again foresee a radical change of emphasis within higher education with less and less weight being attached to the initial stages and to integrated degree programs, and more and more to much more flexible forms of continuing education. These flexible forms of continuing education could then retrospectively be negotiated back into an undergraduate degree or postgraduate degree.

I can do little more today than just flag these questions. I cannot suggest clear answers. But let me end this second section with two reflections. The first is that inevitably the first year or the freshman year will become a much less clear-cut stage of higher education as a variety of strategies are adopted to deal with the issues I have raised. As the coherence of degree-level study declines, it will become more and more difficult to maintain its integrity, its clear progression, and its enveloping rationale. The second is that the first or freshman year will become much more difficult to order and control from above. Its shape will be driven and decided much more by students than by their teachers. As a result, it may become a diverse and even chaotic episode, but not one that necessarily is less valuable or less important. Neither of these reflections should be interpreted as evidence that the first-year experience has somehow become less significant in higher education. Very much the reverse. As the point or points of entry for a more diverse and no doubt more demanding student population, it will become more important than ever.

Finally, I would like to address the non-academic issues, the social and pastoral implications, the larger trends that I have been talking about. Under this heading I would like to highlight two themes in particular. The first is that for many first-year students who are coming into higher education from new constituencies, non-academic issues will be of crucial importance. Students will come to higher education from backgrounds where going to college is not necessarily an automatic expectation or an inherited family experience. This is already the case to a considerable degree, even in an elite and restricted system like Britain. First-year students may have to overcome, particularly if they are studying part-time, the indifference, perhaps even the hostility, of their families. When I say families, I am talking about partners as much as parents or perhaps more than parents. In other words, they are likely to be--although very well motivated to enter higher education academically--socially underprepared, and that is an issue which I think has to be given more emphasis. As a result, their difficulties are as likely to be social--perhaps even psychological--as intellectual. They may also be practical. Of course, child care is likely to be a growing need rather than an exceptional requirement for first-year students.

The second theme is simply that paternalism is likely to be much less acceptable to future generations of first-year students, even paternalism in the rather low profile kind of post-1960s form in which it still survives in higher education. Increasingly, the first-year experience will need to be seen as a shared experience, a kind of equal partnership between teachers and students. It will no longer be possible to see any stage of higher education, even the preparatory one, as a means by which the kind of wisdom of the old and mature is passed on to the young and immature, or even see it as a kind of intensive process of socialization. Perhaps a better way to look at it is as a series of negotiated deals that cover academic and non-academic questions between students, their teachers, and their institutions. Under these new conditions, the old idea of pastoral care will be very difficult to sustain. Instead, it will have to be redefined as a kind of back-up sales service, service contract, or something like that. This will make pastoral care more, rather than less,

important. Certainly the first-year students of the 1990s will want better back-up, but they will not want it packaged in an old-fashioned, paternalistic wrapping. I have already spoken for quite long enough and I hope sufficiently controversially or perhaps ignorantly to provoke discussion or controversy. So let me just try to end by underlying again some of the points I have made in a shorthand way.

First, the first-year experience *is* the higher education experience. But it is also a particularly intense component of the whole, the point where not two but many worlds collide.

Second, the first-year experience will be in the forefront of the changes that are rushing up on higher education because of the changes in demography, technology, and also changes in intellectual culture over which we actually have very little command.

Third, because of these changes, the first year will become a less clearly defined stage in higher education. First-year students will be a much more mixed bunch. The tidy kind of serial arrangement of higher education which, even in California, educators tried to maintain to some extent, will break down as degree and non-degree programs, undergraduate and graduate courses, and initial and continuing education programs are increasingly confused.

Fourth, the shape of the first year will be increasingly determined by forces outside the academy. Here the radical uncoupling of school from college education, the back-to-basics movement, the attack on relativism, the rise of a new vocationalism as evidenced by shifting student preferences, and also changes in the mass media and popular culture are especially important.

Fifth, the first year will be an arena in which fierce battles are fought out between expert and general skills, between capability and culture, and between liberalism and vocationalism. But in spite of the frequent demands for the reassertion of integrity and orthodoxy, centrifugal forces will become especially powerful.

Sixth, traditional notions of excellence in first-year studies may have to be abandoned, and I am sorry if that's a stark comment. The first-year experience will have to be fitted to the freshmen and not the other way around.

Seventh, old fashioned ideas about pastoral care which embodied the paternalism and also the superiority of the wise will need to be replaced by a new concept of student back-up or package of fringe benefits negotiated between equal partners.

My list, of course, could be extended, as no doubt it could be diminished, by those who disagree with the emphasis I have placed upon particular issues. I have deliberately spoken in general terms, not only because I cannot claim to be an expert in the detailed issues that surround the first-year experience, but also because it seemed to me important to place that experience within the total higher education context and because what happens in the first year of higher education so clearly dominates and determines what comes next.

The first year is both higher education's own advance guard and also its first line of defense which must absorb the changes that have come crashing up onto the academy in the remaining years of this century and perhaps beyond. In both senses, therefore, the first year enjoys a unique importance. It is where higher education is and where it certainly will have to be in the 1990s.

The authors

Arthur E. Levine

Arthur Levine currently serves as senior faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Chair for the Institute for Educational Management. He is the author of a number of classic works in higher education including *When Dreams and Heroes Died: A Portrait of Today's College Students, Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum, A Quest for Common Learning,* (with Ernest Boyer), and *Why Innovation Fails.* His most recent book is *Shaping Higher Education's Future,* published in 1989. Levine is executive editor of *Change* magazine and he has served as consultant to more than 200 colleges and universities. Prior to coming to Harvard he was President of Bradford College and Senior Fellow at the Carnegie Foundation and Carnegie Council for Policy Studies in Higher Education.

Alexander W. Astin

Alexander W. Astin is Professor of Higher Education and Director of the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles. For the past 25 years, he has directed the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, an ongoing national study of some 7,000,000 students and 1300 higher education institutions. Astin has authored 17 books and 200 other publications in the field of higher education on such topics as outcomes and values of higher education and institutional quality. A recent study in the *Journal of Higher Education* identified him as the most frequently cited author in the field of higher education. In 1985, readers of *Change* magazine selected Astin as the person "most admired for creative, insightful thinking" in higher education.

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Reginald Wilson

Reginald Wilson is Senior Scholar of the American Council on Education. He joined the Council as Director of the Office of Minority Concerns in 1981. Prior to that appointment, he was President of Wayne County Community College in Detroit, a position he held for nearly ten years. Wilson is the co-author of *Human Development in the Urban Community,* the editor of *Race and Equity in Higher Education,* and the author of *Civil Liberties and the U. S.* He is on the editorial board of *The American Journal of Education* and *The Urban Review.* Wilson was honored as a Distinguished Alumnus of Wayne State University in 1980 and is a recipient of the Anthony Wayne Award and the Distinguished Service Medal of the City of Detroit.

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Peter Scott

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